Man in CW-1 scam files Labor complaint. PAGE 6
MVA welcomes Japan MICE group. PAGE 13

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXVII, Issue No. 235

www.saipantribune.com | MONDAY NOVEMBER 27, 2017 | www.facebook.com/saipantribune | 75¢

Search on for distressed vessel

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Authorities on Saipan have been searching since Saturday morning for a distressed vessel in the waters west of the island.

As of press time last night, *Saipan Tribune* was still waiting for an update from acting Department of Public Safety information officer Lt. Jason Tarkong about the missing vessel, identified as *My Lady*.

DPS has yet to release information

See SEARCH on Page 4

CHRISTMAS IS IN THE AIR
Families have their pictures taken at the Christmas Village, located at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center. The Lady Diann Foundation Christmas Village was officially opened to the public with a lighting ceremony. The display is now open every night in celebration of the holidays.

KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

Kilili remains optimistic with CW-1 extension

By ERWIN ENCINARES
Erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The 3,000 cut in CNMI-Only Transitional Worker slots for fiscal year 2018 was devastating news to business owners and elected leaders alike, but Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) remains optimistic that the CW-1 program would be extended beyond 2019.

Sablan

The CW-1 program, which handles the CNMI's foreign labor workforce, is slated to end in 2019. The program

See KILILI on Page 4

'Local, national immigration should not be mixed'

By BEA CABRERA
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Local business leaders believe the Commonwealth's CNMI-Only Transitional Worker program should not be tied to the national debate on immigration.

Not too many people in Washington, D.C. know about the CNMI's immigration history and the CNMI should educate the U.S. Congress about this matter, said Northern Marianas Business Alliance Corp. member Marian Aldan-Pierce.

"The immigration issue [of the Commonwealth] today should not be mixed with national immigration because the latter is talking about security from illegal immigrants and the issue with CWs is about people that were invited to come here and be with us," she said.

This argument was expressed during last week's Social Economic Development Council meeting on Capital Hill and came a day after U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service announced it will be cutting 3,000 slots from the CW-1 program at a time when the islands' economy is improving.

"Majority of guest workers in the CNMI are here at the invitation of the government and business

See LOCAL on Page 4

INSIDE

LOCAL
Yvonne Bennett returns to Saipan for the premiere of the film *Love, Kennedy.*

PAGE 2

BUSINESS
Parking lots were full and shopping bags were plentiful in some places.

PAGE 14

WORLD
Friday's assault was Egypt's deadliest attack by extremists in the country's history.

PAGE 17

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Local

Bennett headlines film premiere

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Yvonne Bennett made a triumphant return to Saipan and headlined the premiere of the film *Love, Kennedy* last Sunday at the Regal Cinemas in San Jose.

Bennett, who plays the supporting character of Lexi Velasquez in the film, has returned home for the film's local premiere.

It took two years of acting classes, modelling classes, and more before landing the role "It was a lot of training, auditions, modelling classes, a lot of prep work that I had been doing," she said.

The daughter of Ambrose and Lillian was invited to audition for her role by a director she worked with in an acting workshop.

"He was really impressed with my work and he invited me to the audition…Two weeks later I heard that I got the part," said Bennett.

Love, Kennedy is a film based on the life of Kennedy Hansen, who fell ill and died from Battens disease.

Bennett feels honored that her first film turned out to be one based on a brave and humble family. "They were so brave to just allow the world to see the story of Kennedy... she's an inspiration to me as well," she said. "I've always been drawn to true stories and for it to be one of my first films, I just couldn't have asked for a better first project for myself."

According to her, one of the biggest challenges she faced on set was when she was required to film all her heavier, emotional scenes all at once.

See BENNETT on Page 4

KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
Yvonne Bennett, left, poses for a photo with first lady Diann Torres yesterday before the premiere of the film *Love, Kennedy,* where Bennett plays a supporting role.

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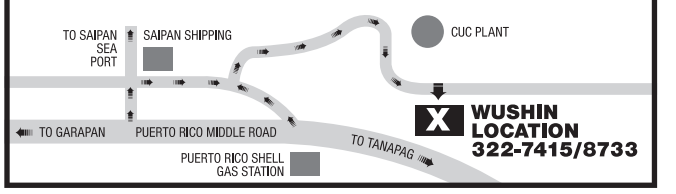

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RESULTS

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FOR NOT LOCATING DRUG PIPE

Man allegedly assaults girlfriend

A 28-year-old man allegedly assaulted his girlfriend after he could not find the pipe he uses to smoke methamphetamine or "ice" last Tuesday morning. The alleged victim suffered cuts to her right thigh.

Jasmer Dela Cruz Koshiro was arrested for assault and battery and disturbing the peace.

A $5,000 cash bail was imposed for his temporary release; preliminary hearing is on Dec. 1.

Assistant public defender Cindy Nesbit was appointed as counsel for Koshiro. Assistant attorney general Teri Tenorio appeared for the government. Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho presided.

Two police officers responded to a disturbance at a home in Susupe last Tuesday at 7:49am. The officers met with the victim, who appeared to have been crying and had small cuts on her right thigh.

The officers learned that on the evening of Nov. 20, the victim and Koshiro had an argument. The next morning, the victim woke up to her 2-month old baby crying.

Koshiro, who was asleep on the floor next to the bed, where the victim and the baby slept, woke up. As the victim was getting out of bed, Koshiro allegedly grabbed the infant on both legs with one hand and aggressively pulled the baby toward him and carried the baby.

The victim said Koshiro asked her for his pipe and, when she said she did not know, he hit her on the side of her head with a backpack. The victim stood up to defend herself, but Koshiro shoved her, causing her to stumble and collide with an electric fan, which was on. The fan had no front cover, causing small cuts on the victim's leg.

She left the house and called for police help. She told police that it was not the first time that Koshiro hit her but that it was her first time to report it to police.

She said that on separate occasions, Koshiro threatened to kill her and their baby and burn the house. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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Benavente confirmed as Labor chief

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Senate had confirmed Vicky Benavente as secretary of the CNMI Department of Labor.

According to Benavente, her main priority is preparing for the 2019 expiration of the CNMI-Only Transitional Worker program as set by Public Law 110-229. She said that, through teamwork between government agencies, the CNMI workforce need not remain reliant on foreign workers in order to satisfy business needs.

"By working closely with the private business sector, through the Chamber of Commerce, Strategic Economic Development Council, and Marianas Visitors Authority membership, I believe we can develop training programs, [such as] apprenticeship, that will try to match employees with skills required by the business sector," she said.

Benavente

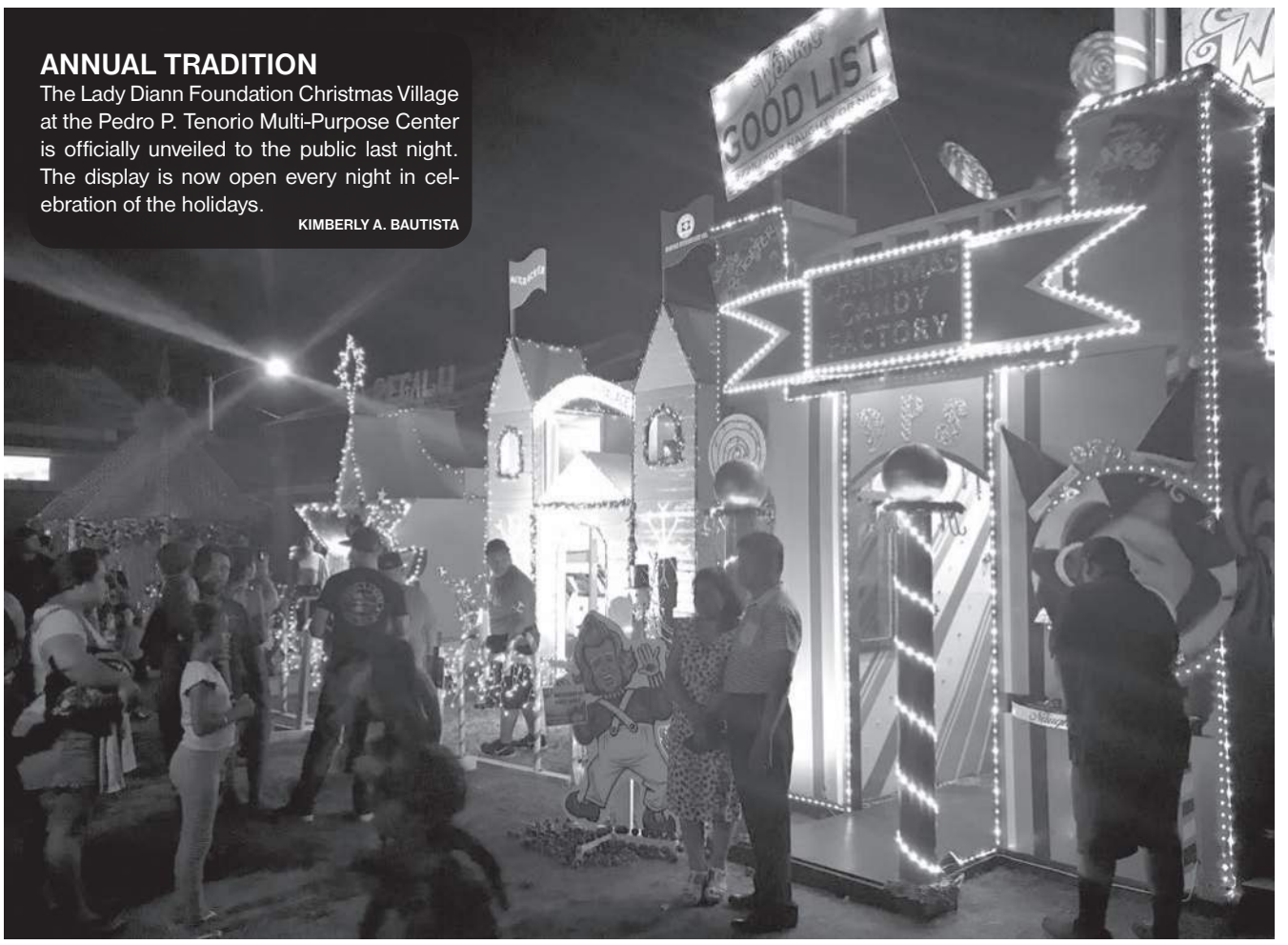
The Senate's concerns such as compliance and enforcement issues would be addressed, she assured, "with the timely submission of documents by the businesses, which will help DOL put together crucial data regarding employee listing, residency status, and workforce development plans."

Sen. Teresita Santos (R-Rota) and Sen. Justo Quitugua (Ind-Saipan) are confident in Benavente's capability. Quitugua described her as a "committed, dedicated, and a very qualified individual."

"I am very confident that [Benavente] would provide the right leadership; she has the tools, the experience, the knowledge, and the skills to work with people, both in [the private and public sector] to improve the department," Quitugua said.

"I thank her for accepting a very challenging and very stressful job, but I have full confidence she [will do well]," he added.

"She already has initiatives and plans that she intends to pursue in enhancing DOL and, in particular, improving the workforce by strictly enforcing CNMI labor laws and policies," said Santos.



ANNUAL TRADITION
The Lady Diann Foundation Christmas Village at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center is officially unveiled to the public last night. The display is now open every night in celebration of the holidays.
KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

BENNETT

From Page 2

"Just having to bring the emotions and do justice for the film, that was one of the most challenging but also the most rewarding," she said.

Aside from Love, Kennedy, Bennett has starred in commercials, training videos for the veteran's hospital, and will soon take on a supporting role in an upcoming horror film, Big Foot on Mill Creek; Dead End.

Bennett was born in Guam, but raised on Saipan. She spent her primary and her teen years on Saipan before leaving for Boise, Idaho, and then Utah.

According to her, being back home feels like nothing has changed. "It's like I never left because it just picks up from where I was last time…it makes me even more humble and grounded," she said.

The Women's Affair Office of the Governor's Office and the Lady Diann Torres Foundation funded Bennett's trip to Saipan.

According to First Lady Diann Torres, they wanted to inspire other individuals on island to dream big and pursue those dreams. "Even from a little island…we can make it big out there," she said.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said it is important to emphasize the talent that comes from the islands. "When you have success like this outside [Saipan], you want to emphasize it and you want to embrace it and nothing beats that than bringing them back home," he said. "I want her to know that even if the CNMI is small, we're still here and are supporting her no matter what."

Many who watched Love, Kennedy yesterday were moved to tears.

According to Mariana Gramlich, the movie was inspiring and ideal for the holidays.

Another moviegoer, Serena Santos, said the movie was definitely a tearjerker.

Bennett's mother and father could not be more proud of their daughter.

"I am over excited, I am overwhelmed, and I am proud," said Lillian, Bennett's mother.

"I am not really surprised. We always encourage them to pursue their dreams and that's what she has been doing," said Ambrose, Bennett's father.

Bennett's mother also said she was thankful for the foundations that helped bring her daughter home after five years.

KILILI

From Page 1

has already been extended once, back in 2014.

In a news briefing last week, Sablan said he remains confident in the program being extended anew.

"The working group agrees that there needs to be an extension; that has already been agreed to. It's not a matter of how long, but a matter of how many," said Sablan,

He said he has been working on legislation to extend the CW-1 program. The legislation, which would most likely originate from the U.S. Senate, already has boundaries set up for discussion by a working group led by U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK). The problem Sablan sees is that the group does not include Gov. Ralph DLG Torres.

According to Sablan, he and Murkowski have reached an agreement that Torres would be included in the working group; however, the U.S. senator has yet to invite the governor to join.

"We have agreed that the Governor's Office would be part of the working group. When that invitation is extended is not my call, but I have asked and she agreed. The chairwoman could call the governor next week, today, next year, I don't know, but I continue to insist that the governor be part of the working group," he said.

"The working group has set a parameter, a framework of what we can do in the bill, what we can include and not include, and it is a working progress," said Sablan, adding that they have yet to come up with a bill.

"…But we are discussing what is possible to do in the extension: a longer term extension? How do we handle long-term workers? Do we give them a longer term visa here? Open up a whole new visa category for them and not count that toward the CW-1 visa cap? What is the visa cap? How do we reduce the cap? How do we issue increases in caps? Do we set it up for 10 years with administrative extensions for another five years? Those are things that are being hashed out right now."

As work on the extension is ongoing, Sablan belied common perception that the U.S. Congress has no idea of what is going on in the CNMI.

He said there are congressional staffers who look at local media outlets to gather information on the CNMI.

"…We have news clippings that are of interest to the committee, whether it's issues about the ocean, water, or the territories…and the members [of the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee] read that," he said. "[The committee] reads our papers; they have information that they get from our paper."

SEARCH

From Page 1

on how many people were on the vessel.

DPS said that on Saturday at about 10:40am, it received a call from the U.S. Coast Guard reporting a distress call from a vessel identified as *My Lady* over the VHF marine radio channel 16.

DPS Boating Safety Section then launched its search-and- rescue boat called *Impact* to conduct the grid search patterns 20 miles west of Saipan.

The USCG also launched a rescue vessel and helicopter to assist with the search.

DPS said that visibility was poor and water conditions were rough on Saturday due to high winds and rough water. There was no sight of the distressed vessel. The search was called off late Saturday afternoon. DPS BSS vessels made their way back to Saipan.

A small craft advisory has been in effect since Thursday.

LOCAL

From Page 1

people. They entered legally and the purpose of their stay is legitimate," Aldan-Pierce pointed out.

That may sound elementary but the difference between CNMI immigration and U.S. immigration is something that needs to be discussed, Aldan-Pierce said.

"I do not think that the U.S would do anything to harm our economy. And our economy includes people that we invited to come here, which is why we have an economy in the first place," she said. "We should remind them of who we are and why we are here. We should not be muddled up in the national immigration today because it is very different."

Change of status

Another SEDC member, lawyer Maya Kara, pointed out what could have been if the status of longterm workers had already been enhanced.

"If you recall, when the federalization bill was first proposed, one of the major elements of that was to enhance the status of long-term workers. If we had done that then or achieved that, we would not be here and I am wondering if it is still possible to talk about that—to really go down with the people that we really need with good employers who comply with the law," she said.

NMBAC president Alex Sablan said that there hasn't been political will to talk about immigration at the national front, let alone in the local front.

"Not to say we are not going after the idea. We talked about this even in the last round of the idea of H.R. 339. But the political will was not there in Washington, D.C. to present an immigration front for status in the Commonwealth," he said.

"We are adding a provision that we believe would be palatable for some type of status and that has been proposed by [Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan] and his group to extend CNMI-only status to foreign national workers. This way, they can remain in the Commonwealth to work for a period as CNMI residents and not be able to move to Guam or the mainland. The eventual scenario is that down the road, they will be able to seek further status like permanent residency or green card," he added.

Currently, the NMBAC believes there is still an opportunity to lessen the cuts outlined by USCIS and is adding amendments to immigration provisions that would be more viable to the CNMI economy, which they intend to lobby in Congress in the coming days.

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Man in CW-1 scam files Labor complaint vs custodian

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

One of six defendants in the CW-1 scam case who had already pleaded guilty has filed a Labor complaint against his custodian.

With the filing of the complaint, Nurul Bhuiyan is no longer willing to serve as Zeaur Rahman Dalu's third-party custodian.

At a pretrial release conditions hearing last Friday, David Banes, the court-appointed counsel for Dalu, told U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona that the issue arose when Bhuiyan found out that Dalu had filed a Labor complaint against him.

No other information was given regarding the complaint.

Banes had proposed that Dalu be released on his own recognizance until Dec. 1, 2017, when he is scheduled to self-surrender to begin his prison sentence.

Banes said that Dalu will continue to live at the same place with location monitoring and all other release conditions will remain in place.

Assistant U.S. attorney James Benedetto's only concern with the proposal is Dalu's safety since he will continue to live at the same location, adding that there have been repeated threats against Dalu.

Manglona accepted Banes' proposal and relieved Bhuiyan as third-party custodian, but informed the parties that Dalu will remain in location monitoring.

Manglona ordered Dalu to self-surrender to the U.S. Marshal's Service on Dec. 1, 2017.

Dalu will then be received by the Department of Corrections where he will be given credit for time served at the sentencing hearing set for March 29, 2018.

Mangona said that Dalu has permission to take off his location monitoring device on Dec. 1 and to hand it to DOC where U.S. probation officer Gregory Arriola will pick it up.

Last August, Dalu pleaded guilty to two counts of fraud in foreign contracting for bringing Bangladeshi men to Saipan on promises of good-paying jobs and green cards in exchange for cash.

Dalu testified for the U.S. government during the trial against his co-defendants.

Last Oct. 18, a federal jury found David Trung Quoc Phan and co-defendants Muksedur Rahman and Md. Rafiqul Islam guilty.

Phan's fiancée, Analyn Nunez, and Rahman's wife, Shahinur Akter, were acquitted.

Salvation Army annual Thanksgiving lunch gains participation of Torreses

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

First lady Diann Torres, front row second from left, and Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, front row third from left, pose for a photo with Salvation Army NMI chapter staff during the Chapter's annual Thanksgiving lunch last Thursday. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Salvation Army NMI Chapter hosted its annual Thanksgiving lunch last Thursday with the participation of both Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and first lady Diann Torres—a first.

First lady Diann Torres has been a part of the Salvation Army's annual Thanksgiving lunch, but this was the first year for Gov. Ralph DLG Torres to be invited to join in.

"Lady Diann has been doing this for quite a few years now and this year they invited me to join her," he said.

Torres said it was a great feeling. "It was really nice to go there and spend some time with them and share the whole festivities, appreciating, and giving thanks."

Torres and the first lady also made the first donations to the Salvation Army's iconic red kettle. The Red Kettle season kicked off last Friday.

Last Thursday, Torres and his wife mingled with the Salvation Army's staff and those who joined the Salvation Army for Thanksgiving, helping carve the turkey, and more.

According to Salvation Army NMI Chapter ministry leader Wayne Gillespie, "we were honored to have Gov. Torres and first lady Dianne join us for our annual community Thanksgiving lunch and for donating food for the event. We are also grateful to them for officially opening our Red Kettle season," he said.

The Salvation Army NMI Chapter distributed 700 meals during Thanksgiving, including deliveries.

"Many meals were delivered to various locations around our island, including Kagman, Koblerville, Chalan Kanoa, and to several homebound persons," he said.

Gillespie said thanks to all the volunteers and donors. "Our volunteers work especially hard to put on this event each year and a large number of them stay up all night cooking and making various preparations so that we can serve on time. I can't say enough about how proud and grateful I am to them," Gillespie said.

The donors of this year's Thanksgiving lunch were the Torres couple, Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP), Bank of Hawaii, Dickerson and Quinn, Foremost, Saipan Community School, Tribe Marianas, Dolores Yamagishi, Herman's Bakery, and several others who prefer to remain anonymous.

SIS student shows interest in restoring war tanks

A student is seeking help from the Saipan municipal government in his attempt to restore Japanese tanks.

Saipan International School sophomore R.J. Pierce has asked Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang to support him in his mission, not so much financially or even with manpower but through word of mouth.

According to Pierce, as a young person with big plans, community members tend to doubt his capabilities. With Apatang's support, Pierce said this could potentially encourage others to support his project.

Pierce is determined to restore the Japanese tank displayed along Beach Road and the tank gun near the Francisco C. Ada-Saipan International Airport. ***(Kimberly A. Bautista)***

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The provisions of the CNMI Procurement regulations, NMIAC 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A mandatory pre-proposal conference is scheduled on Friday, December 01, 2017, at 10:00 a.m. at the NMHC Conference Room, Saipan. Only those individuals who have paid the RFP Package Fee are allowed to attend the pre-proposal conference. All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing to Mr. Jesse S. Palacios, Corporate Director, NMHC, Saipan, fax to (670)234-9021, no later than Friday, December 01, 2017, 4:30 p.m. local time.

For more information, contact Mr. Jesse S. Palacios, Corporate Director, at (670) 234-6866/9447 during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/
Ignacio L. Perez
Board Chairman

/s/
Herman S. Sablan, Director
Division of Procurement & Supply

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REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

This is to inform all Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC)-approved Contractors (including Tinian and Rota contractors) that we are currently updating our Approved Contractor Listing for calendar year 2018. In order for NMHC to extend your company's inclusion on our listing for another year, you must submit the documentations listed below. Those companies that are not on our list of approved contractors but wish to be included are likewise encouraged to submit the following:

1. Valid CNMI Business License
2. Current Financial Statements (certified by the principle executive officer and principle financial officer)
3. 2 Years Business Gross Revenue (BGR) Tax Returns
4. 2 Years Corporate Income Tax Returns (1120)
5. Clearance Letter from the Department of Labor
6. Certificate of Compliance from the Revenue & Taxation Office
7. Workmen's Compensation Policy
8. Name of Insurance Company(ies) Currently Dealing With
9. A list of on-going/completed projects showing name of project, start and completion dates, and contract amounts
10. At least three (3) reference letters from owners of the completed projects
11. List of vendors and suppliers and at least three reference letters from them (CONSTRUCTION QUARRY, READY-MIX CEMENT & HARDWARE STORES)
12. Company background
13. Articles of Incorporation & Company By-Laws, if applicable
14. Annual Report (Registrar of Corporations)

FAILURE TO SUBMIT THE ABOVE DOCUMENTS BY FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2017 WILL RESULT IN YOUR COMPANY'S ELIMINATION FROM OUR LIST OF "APPROVED CONTRACTORS".

NMHC encourages Minority and Women-Owned Businesses (MBE/WBE) to participate in this Request for Qualifications and that they will be afforded full opportunity to participate and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, national origin, political affiliation, creed, sex, religion, age, familial status, or disability status.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

/S/ JESSE S. PALACIOS
CORPORATE DIRECTOR

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Dough Scaler & Mixer (2)

Classification: Full-Time, Non-Exempt, 32-40 hours per week, 6 days per week, 7am - 2pm
Rate: $7.05 to $7.25/hr
Department: Operations
Reports to: Manager In Charge (MIC)

Summary of Responsibilities
Prepares the pizza dough every morning to use throughout the day.

Essential Functions
- Responsible fo dough preparedness as prescribed from manager In Charge
- Complies with all portioning, quality standards, rules, policies, and safety procedures
- Selects and transports raw items to work are and back. Stores finished products in proper places
- Selects proper equipment and utensils to prepare as procedure require – dough mixer, whips, pitcher, proofer, bun-o-matic, retarder and dough roller.

Other Functions
Performs other duties as assigned

Abilities, Knowledge, and Skills
Must be able to work the opening shift. Able to understand and implement written and verbal instructions. Must possess basic math skills.

Required Experience
Previous bakery experience required.

Education/Experience
High school diploma required.

Physical and/or Medical Requirements
Must obtain a Tuberculosis Clearance Certificate. Position requires well-paced mobility for minimum periods minimum of four hours. Requires standing and walking for the entire workday. Must be able to bend and stoop occasionally. Must be able to occasionally lift 40 lbs. Must have sensory capabilities to select quality of sauce. Must have finger dexterity to use some utensil tools.

Working Conditions
Minimal hazards. General restaurant working conditions.

EMPLOYER'S RIGHTS: *This job description does not list all the duties of the job. You may be asked by your supervisors or managers to perform other duties. You will be evaluated in part based upon your performance of the tasks listed in this job description. The employer has the right to revise this job description at any time. The job description is not a contract for employment, and either you or the employer may terminate employment at any time, for any reason.*

All interested applicants may get application at Pizza Hut Restaurant in Gualo Rai
Closing Date: November 28, 2017

CUSTOMER APPRECIATION

PRO-MO

...THREE...TWO...ONE...PRO!

2017 Customer Appreciation Raffle PRO-mo runs from now until December 30, 2017.
Our simple way of saying...
THANK YOU, CNMI.

Saipan Computer Services...
SERVICE BEYOND THE SALE

TAKE HOME OUR GRAND PRIZE:

THE MICROSOFT SURFACE PRO BUNDLED WITH...
A PYLE PRO HOME THEATRE SMART WIFI PROJECTOR AND
A PAIR OF BOSE SOUNDLINK REVOLVE BLUETOOTH PRO SPEAKER

A COMPLETE MOBILE HOME THEATRE PACKAGE FOR THE PRO!

This Holiday Season... Saipan Computer Services will turn you into a PRO! Be PROactive, PROficient, PROductive, and Be a PROgressive PROfessional! Join our Customer Appreciation Raffle PRO-mo...

AND WIN:

Fitbit Flex 2 wristband
The Lenovo Yoga Tab3 Tablet
Beats by Dr. Dre Solo3 Wireless Headphones
A GoPRO Hero Session
Sony Destiny 2 Playstation 4 PRO
The Apple iPad PRO
HP PROdesk 400 mini pc
The Apple 13.3" MacBook PRO

Every $25 PURCHASE entitles you to a Raffle Ticket. And get a $50 REBATE CERTIFICATE for every purchase of a Desktop or Laptop Computer.

IDEAL SIGNS
SCS Saipan Computer Services
Service beyond the sale...

Raffle Draw on January 2, 2018. Some restrictions may apply.

1st Marianas International Film Festival Dec.6-8,2017

Screening
Time: 10:00-22:00, Dec. 7,2017
Venue: Regal Saipan Megaplex 7

PUBLIC IS WELCOMED FOR FREE VIEWING!

AWARDS CEREMONY • NIGHT OF SAIPAN
TIME: 18:00, DEC. 8, 2017
Venue: Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel lobby

Saipan filmmakers are encouraged to submit/ sign in.

MIFF
MARIANAS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

For more details, please contact Ms. Lee via email Aasaipan@gmail.com.
www.marianasiff.com

Cabrera getting accustomed as BECQ administrator

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality finally has a permanent administrator after the resignation of long-time administrator Frank Rabauliman.

Former Parks and Recreation director Eliceo Cabrera has been the bureau's acting administrator since October. He was officially appointed the permanent administrator replacing Rabauliman after his retirement last September.

According to Cabrera, a former House speaker, he will do his best to ensure that the bureau is well taken cared of under his leadership.

Since returning from his trip from China with Lt. Gov. Victor B. Hocog and a couple of other government agency heads, Cabrera said he has been tending to many projects while also getting accustomed to his new position.

"I am still not very familiar with this office even if I have been with the government for over 20 years, but there's a lot of things to be done and a lot to learn," he said.

He said his new position is completely different from his role at Parks and Recreations and from his role in the Legislature.

According to Cabrera, now that he has been officially appointed administrator, he will do his best to fully understand each of the divisions that are currently under the bureau's jurisdiction and will do his best to make improvements if needed.

Division of Environment Quality director Ray Masga said he feels confident about Cabrera becoming the new administrator. "I feel really good about it," he said.

Masga also said that Cabrera is an easy person to work with and gets along with because of his open-mindedness.

"I think he's very open-minded with the issues that we have and I think that he is giving us the opportunity to continue all our programs," Masga said.

Cabrera is currently in the process of gaining all the information he needs in order to run the bureau and, according to him, he is ready to take on the challenges that comes with his new position.

Aqua Resort to open romantic dining resto

Looking for a place where you can have a romantic date? Look no further than Aqua Resort Club's Kevin's The Prime Rib and Seafood Restaurant.

General manager Kevin Tsurui said the concept of the former Raraina Restaurant started out when one of his employees asked for his advice.

"Back in January one of our employees came up to me and told me that he was thinking of proposing marriage to his girlfriend but the his problem was he could not find a romantic restaurant on island. After thinking about it, I agreed with him."

At the same time, as Aqua Resort Club GM, Tsurui was frequently approached by regular customers who would always ask him, "You used to serve the greatest prime rib and Caesar salad. Why did you stop that?"

That gave him the idea to combine a romantic restaurant with one that serves the resort's famous prime rib and Caesar salad—Kevin's The Prime Rib and Seafood Restaurant—that focuses on a romantic ambiance and serves great food and wine, together with excellent service.

"When I hear the word romantic, I see old Hollywood. The classic movies like *Casablanca, An Affair to Remember, Breakfast at Tiffany's* and the like." Tsurui said.

That's reflected in the restaurant's decor. The walls' red, black, and white colors and accents are highlighted by the glow of dim lights and candlelit tables. Framed photos of Old Hollywood actors and actresses are aplenty.

"The photos are a conversation starter. All those details—pen lights, cozy booths, music from the movies as background—makes Kevin's the most romantic and highest quality restaurant on Saipan," Tsurui said.

The prime ribs itself will be served on a wagon by the chef, who will be serving guests four different kinds of cuts: Saipan cut, Kevin's cut, Golden Alex ward cut, and Michelle's cut.

"The Saipan cut is composed of three thin slices for people who do not want a thick slice. Michelle's cut is for the light meat eater, Golden Alex ward cut is a 14-ounce meat with bone (tomahawk style), and Kevin's cut is the popular cut named after the restaurant," he said.

Appetizers will be a fusion of Japanese, French, and traditional American food.

"We have scallops from Hokkaido, Japan. We don't cook all the way so it is served half-raw, sitting on a bed of truffle and mushroom sauce with caviar on top and also raw salmon that melts in your mouth because it is so tender," he said.

The restaurant not only serves steak; it also has seafood, according to Aqua Resort Club sales and marketing assistant manager Victoria Sorell. "People can expect a nice combination of dishes because we…have something for everyone."

A waiter will make your Caesar salad in front of you, with the dressing made from scratch.

Tsurui said the restaurant can seat 102 people: 92 on the floor and 10 for the private room.

"We also have *a la carte* menu and serve other kinds of meat like grilled pork chop and chicken," Tsurui said.

Kevin's The Prime Rib and Seafood Restaurant will open its doors to the public on Dec. 1 It will be open from 6:30pm to 10pm. A 10-percent discount is available for residents.

For reservations, call(670) 322-1225 or check www.aquaresortsaipan.com. ***(Bea Cabrera)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Secretary of Public Works
2nd floor-Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan, MP 96950

INVITATION FOR BIDS
DPW-18-IFB-003

SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF ROLL-OFF TRUCK WITH CABLE HOIST & TARPING SYSTEM TO THE LOWER BASE TRANSFER STATION, SAIPAN

Governor Ralph Dlg. Torres and Lt. Governor Victor B. Hocog, through the Department of Public Works (DPW) are soliciting sealed bids for **Supply & Delivery of Roll-Off Truck with Cable Hoist & Tarping System to the Lower Base Transfer Station (LBTS), Saipan,** Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project package will be available on or after **November 13, 2017** at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan. A non-refundable payment of **Fifty Dollars ($50.00)** is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Teasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at the DPW Technical Services Division.

All interested bidders are also required to include Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC can be obtained at the Department of Commerce/Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations currently in effect."

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITUES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

There will be a **Mandatory Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **December 15, 2017, 9:00 a.m. local time** at Project Site, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **December 22, 2017** to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division,** 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

Prospective bidders should examine and review the invitation for bids with care. If it should appear to a prospective bidder that the performance of the work under the contract or any of the matters relative thereto is not sufficiently described or explained in the invitation for bids, or that any discrepancy exists between different parts of the invitation for bids, or that full intent of the invitation for bids is not clear, then the prospective bidder shall submit a written request for clarification no later than ten (10) working days before the scheduled bid opening at 4:30 pm to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547.

The prospective bidder shall examine carefully the site of the proposed work and the invitation for bids before submitting a bid.

The Contracting Officer (CO) may, upon recommendation of the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR), issue an addendum notifying all prospective bidders known to have received an invitation for bids, or if issued after the deadline for submission of the notice of intention to bid, to those persons who submitted such notice, of any changes to the invitation for bids. The Department of Public Works will make every reasonable attempt to notify all persons who obtained the invitation for bids from the Technical Services Division by telephone to pick up the addendum or if the CO chooses, the addendum may be mailed or delivered personally or by facsimile machine. If the bid proposal requires the acknowledgment of addenda, the prospective bidder shall indicate the date of each addendum in the space provided. **It shall be the prospective bidder's responsibility to confirm the existence of any addendum by telephoning the COTR at (670) 234-9828/9838 no later than ten (10) Calendar days before the scheduled bid opening.**

Sealed bids must be marked **"DPW-18-IFB-003".** For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascencion Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan, no later than **10:00 a.m. local time December 29, 2017.** Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional Seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **10:00 a.m. local time, December 29, 2017,** and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **December 29, 2017** and the BID documents must be received at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **January 05, 2018**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascencion Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan, at **10:00 a.m. local time, January 08, 2018**. However, if no notices of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at **10:30 a.m. local time, on December 29, 2017**.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars **($25,000.00)** a bid security of fifteen (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. **Bid security shall be on a bid bond, in cash, by certified check, cashiers check or other form acceptable to the government. A surety company shall hold the certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety requiring approval of the Attorney General must be pre-approved prior to bid submission.** Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations **§70-30.3-245.** The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance bond, equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than $25,000.00. Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected contractor shall submit:

a) A current license from the bonding company showing that it has authority to issue bond in the CNMI, and
b) A certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments on other bond obligations) exceed the penal amount of the bond.

A contractor submitting an unacceptable performance bond may be permitted a reasonable time, as determined by the P&S Director, to substitute an acceptable bond prior to executing a contract.

Acceptable assets are only:

1) Cash
2) US Gov't Securities
3) Stocks and Bonds traded on US Security Exchange
4) Real Property owned in fee simple in US; and
5) Irrevocable Letters of Credit

Performance time for completion of this project is **One Hundred Twenty (120) calendar days** upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages for delays beyond the established completion date will be assessed at the rate of **Three Hundred (US$300.00)** for each and every day the work is delayed beyond the established completion date.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

/S/ JAMES A. ADA
Secretary of Public Works

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director of Procurement & Supply

NMPASI
NORTHERN MARIANAS PROTECTION & ADVOCACY SYSTEMS, INC.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems, Inc. (NMPASI) is soliciting proposals for the financial and compliance audit for fiscal year ending **September 30, 2017**. NMPASI is designated, federally funded protection and advocacy system for persons with disabilities in the CNMI. NMPASI uses a variety of individual and systems advocacy approaches to protect people's rights, including legal and administrative remedies, legislative, policy change and trainings. Proposals for the financial and compliance audit shall be submitted to NMPASI, P.O. Box 503529, Saipan, MP 96950 no later than December 04, 2017. The audit shall be performed in compliance with the following guidelines:

1. Generally Accepted Auditing Standards;
2. OMB Circular A-133; and
3. Compliance with the general Requirements Applicable to Federal Financial Assistance Program.

Award will be based on specific factor such as prior experience, technical competence, ability to meet the deadline and price in this order. The contract for this audit will be awarded no later than **December 11, 2017**, and a final audit report shall be completed by March 16, 2018. A list of specific audit requirements and Agency's profile are available at NMPASI office, Gualo Rai. Any questions regarding this matter can be addressed to Mr. James Rayphand, Executive Director at tel 235-7273

TEACHERS OF THE YEAR
Members of the Board of Education and acting Education commissioner Glen Muña pose with the 2017-2018 "Teacher of the Year" awards winners during Education Day last Nov. 22 at Hopwood Middle School.
BEA CABRERA

Learn how to manage stress at SHRM meeting

The CNMI Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management will feature two stress management experts at its Nov. 30 membership meeting at the Pacific Islands Club's Charley's Cabaret, from 11:30am to 1:30pm.

Wilma Villanueva and Christopher Cabrera, both of the Community Guidance Wellness Center, are Saipan-born and -raised and have master's degrees in counseling. Together they will provide a workshop providing guidance on the management of stress.

Stress is a fact of everyday life—but too much stress often makes people ineffective and reduces the control they have over their lives. This program is intended to help participants identify their personal difficulties, will point out stress management and relaxation strategies and discuss how to become more effective in handling everyday pressures in a sustainable way.

Villanueva attended National University of San Diego, where she graduated with a bachelor's in Psychology and a master's in Counseling Psychology with an Emphasis on Marriage and Family Therapy.

She has worked for the past five years at the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Community Guidance Center under the Wellness Clinic, providing individual/family therapy and psycho-education in the community

Cabrera has a bachelor's in Psychology from Grand Canyon University in Phoenix, Arizona, and a master's in Counseling from the University of Guam. He worked with the CNMI Public School System for nearly 10 years as both a teacher and school counselor and has worked with children of all ages at different grade levels. Since February 2017, he has served as a psychotherapist for the Community Guidance Wellness Center.

Their presentation is open to the public and will be an invaluable opportunity for employers, managers, and HR professionals and staff to learn more about the effect of stress in the workplace and what can be done to alleviate it. Please join SHRM at its monthly luncheon to collaborate with fellow HR professionals and to discuss a problem that affects everyone personally and professionally. The speakers will provide an opportunity for questions.

The presentation includes the PIC lunch buffet at the cost of $20 for SHRM members and $30 for non-members. Seats are limited, so reserve your seat by contacting Penny Jones by email at penelope.jones@hyatt.com or Denise Montenegro at denise.montenegro@hyatt.com or by telephone at 323-5867/68.

SHRM is the world's largest association devoted to human resource management. For more information about the NMI Chapter, you can visit their website at nmichapter.shrm.org. ***(PR)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Small craft advisory

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, a small craft advisory remains in effect until 6pm today, Monday, for the islands of Rota, Tinian, and Saipan. Northeast winds of 20 to 25 knots are expected through today. Combined seas of 8 to 10 feet will reach 10 to 12 feet today. These conditions will be hazardous for operators of small craft. Inexperienced mariners, especially those operating smaller vessels, should avoid sailing in these conditions. ***(PR)***

CCA film screening tomorrow

As part of its Oral Cancer Health Forum Program, the Commonwealth Cancer Association is inviting the public to its screening of the oral cancer documentary titled *Chew* tomorrow, Nov. 28, at 6pm at the American Memorial Park Visitors Center theater. ***(PR)***

MIFICPA to host Excel workshop

The Marianas Institute of Filipino CPAs and Accountants, is inviting all members to this year's workshop on advanced Microsoft Excel. The workshop will be on Dec. 2, 2017, a Saturday, from 8:30am to 12pm, at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe. Registration starts at 8am.

There will be a $5 fee to cover incidentals. Non-members are welcome for a $15 seminar fee. Seats are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Most importantly, please bring your own laptop.

For reservation and more details, check the MIFICPA Facebook page or call or email any of the officers: Angie Mamaril at 783-1857 (angiehmamaril@yahoo.com); Lois Manese at 286-8663 (eloisa_manese@yahoo.com); Cris Bucalig at 287-0945 (cris_bong@yahoo.com) or Gloria Balila at 989-6284 (mgmbalila@yahoo.com). ***(PR)***

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WE'VE MOVED!
SINCE NOVEMBER 18, 2017
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Tel.: 233-3038
Open Monday to Saturday
BEACH ROAD BOG DFS SCHOOL OLD LOCATION NEW LOCATION BOS MIDDLE ROAD

ATTENTION
Government Employees & Retirees!
The Island Smiles Dental Plan now available via your allotment
- **Low Cost:** $5.00 (Individual Plan) $6.00 (Two-Party Plan) or $7.00 (Family Plan) per allotment. Least expensive dental plan in the CNMI
- Members receive at LEAST 20%-50% discounts on all dental procedures. No exceptions!
- **Plan Provider:** Paradise Dental Center. State-of-the art, full service General and Cosmetic dental clinic. Newest dental clinic and most experienced dentist in the CNMI. Really nice people!

Award-winning dentist
Kind and Gentle
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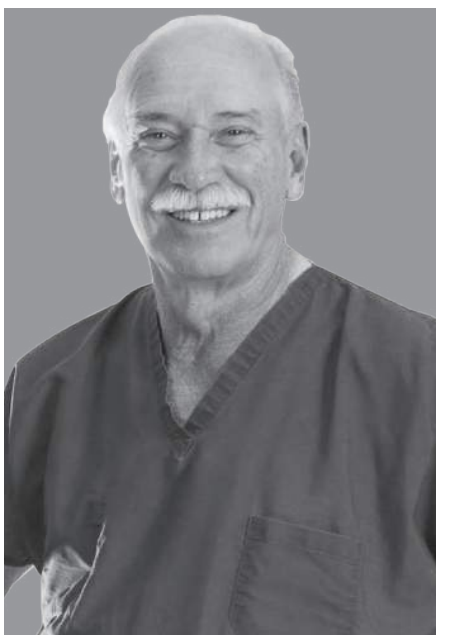
Hawaii Dental Service, TakeCare & Staywell Insurances also accepted. Medicaid patients welcome!
Call 234-4040
Middle Road, Gualo Rai, across Chong's
Stop by and pick up your enrollment packet or send an email request to paradisedentalsaipan@gmail.com

"A Tradition of Excellence!"
Dr. Dennis Williams, a renowned eye surgeon, continues the tradition of excellence at Marianas Eye Institute.
- Received a CNMI House Resolution, "for conducting the CNMI's first Corneal Transplant"
- Listed in "Best Doctors in America"
- Board Certified Ophthalmologist

Prior Experience:
- Assistant Clinical Professor of Ophthalmology, USF
- Director of Corneal Transplant and Refractive Surgery St. Luke's Cataract and Laser Institute, Florida
- Board of Directors, American Board of Eye Surgery
- President, Cataract Teaching Foundation
- Instructor, American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery

We welcome Aetna, Self-pay, Staywell, Netcare, Calvo's, TakeCare, Medicaid, Medicare, Tricare, Blue Cross Blue Shield, and more!



Marianas Eye Institute
"Where Technology Meets Talent"
235-9090
Walk-in's welcome
Beach Road Garapan.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXVII, Issue No. 235

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Reining in Saudi aggression

Saudi Arabia has been using starvation to squeeze Yemen. The Saudi regime stepped up its air, land and sea siege of the war-ravaged Middle East nation in the last two weeks. The global reaction has been harsh. And Wednesday brought news that the Saudis, who aspire to a greater role in geopolitics, just might be getting the message: Stop punishing Yemeni civilians.

The Saudi regime said it would reopen Yemen's international airport in the capital, Sanaa, as well as a primary Red Sea port, so that humanitarian aid could flow into the war-wracked nation.

That's a step in the right direction, though we hope it amounts to a genuine—and not temporary—reprieve for a population struggling to survive.

International relief groups say up to 7 million Yemenis are on the brink of famine. Cholera has stricken at least 900,000 people. More than a quarter of those victims are children under 5. Nearly 400,000 Yemeni children need treatment for severe malnutrition—treatment they haven't been getting because of the blockade, according to Save the Children, an international relief group.

That created desperation in a country heavily dependent on imports of food, medicine and fuel. The Saudis had been allowing a trickle of relief through the port of Aden, but U.N. aid groups say it hasn't been nearly enough.

Yemen has been in the throes of civil war since the spring of 2015. From the conflict's start, the Saudi regime, which opposes Yemen's Shiite Houthi rebels, has intervened on behalf of the country's ousted Sunni leadership. The Saudis also accuse Iran, their long-standing regional archrival, of actively helping the Houthis. Saudi bombing and relentless fighting over the last 2 years have devastated Yemeni society—more than 60 percent of the population was in need of food assistance before the siege.

That blockade was significantly tightened after the firing of a missile from Yemen toward the Saudi capital, Riyadh, earlier this month. Saudi forces intercepted the missile and blamed Iran for supplying the Houthis with the weapon, though they have yet to muster conclusive evidence. Yet the Saudi blockade has done little more than isolate starving Yemeni civilians, millions of whom are children.

Not surprisingly, a Trump administration that has cozied up to the Saudi regime has reacted to the Yemeni crisis with barely a yip. Saudi Arabia has been a U.S. ally for decades, but President Donald Trump has further embraced the Saudi government in his pursuit of other goals in the Middle East.

While Saudi regime appeared to be easing its restrictions on aid to Yemenis, the Trump administration can do a lot more to rein in Saudi aggression. Trump's closeness with the Saudi regime has given him a good deal of clout with Riyadh. He should use it to get the Saudis to begin working toward a day when Yemeni citizens are free from the gears of conflict. Alliances, regardless of their importance or usefulness, should never require turning a blind eye to outright cruelty.

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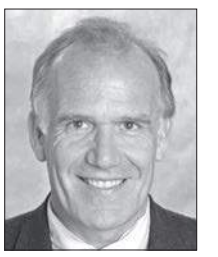
WAYNE PETERS
KANSAS CITY SUN
THAT TURKEY DIDN'T EVEN THANK ME FOR PARDONING HIM...I SHOULD'VE STUFFED'EM...SAD
UNITED STATES TWITTER AND CHIEF OF THE
grimmy.com

China following Japanese model of 1930s



By VICTOR DAVIS HANSON
Tribune News Service

Victor Davis Hanson is a classicist and historian at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University and the author, most recently, of The Father of Us All: War and History, Ancient and Modern. *You can reach him by emailing author@victorhanson.com.*

A few weeks ago, Chinese President Xi Jinping offered a Soviet-style five-year plan for China's progress at the Communist Party congress in Beijing. Despite his talk of global cooperation, the themes were familiar socialist boilerplate about Chinese economic and military superiority to come.

Implicit in the 205-minute harangue were echoes of the themes of the 1930s: A rising new Asian power would protect the region and replace declining Western influence.

President Xi promised that the Chinese patronage offered a new option for his neighbors "to speed up their development while preserving their independence."

Sound familiar?

In the 1930s, Imperial Japan tried to square the same circle of importing Western technology while deriding the West. It deplored Western influence in Asia while claiming its own influence in the region was more authentic.

Only about 60 years after the so-called Meiji Restoration, Japan shocked the West by becoming one of the great industrial and military powers of the world.

Depressed by the superior technology and wealth of Western visitors, late-19th-century Japan entered a breakneck race to create entire new industries—mining, energy, steel—out of nothing.

It soon sent tens of thousands of students to European (and, to a lesser extent, American) universities and military colleges. They mastered Western military organization firsthand.

Japanese engineering students returned home with world-class expertise in aviation, nautical architecture and ballistics—and a disdain for the supposed "decadence" of their mentors.

The Japanese model was first to inspect and assess the latest European and American military technology: single-wing fighters, aircraft carriers, naval torpedo and dive bombers, and battleships. Then they copied the most promising designs but applied trademark Japanese

craftsmanship and government support to make even bigger, sometimes better and often more numerous weapons.

By 1941, Japanese super-battleships, fleet carriers and fighter planes looked almost identical to British and American models. Often they were just as good, if not better.

Japan also felt it had persuasive propaganda to win over its Asian clients. It reminded its Pacific neighbors that Japan's new industries were even more efficient than those of their supposedly more sophisticated European rivals. Tokyo offered greater wealth for Asian clients willing to submit to the Japanese patronage.

Old European powers such as Great Britain and France, Japanese warlords insisted, were spent. They certainly had no moral business assuming the Pacific as their own.

After Japan invaded Manchuria and, later, mainland China, Tokyo seemed to assume that conquered Asian peoples resented not imperialism in general as much as Western imperialism. Supposedly, Asian neighbors would see Japanese exploitation as at least being in the family of the wider Asian community.

Haughty, complacent (and sometimes racist) Americans and British at first scoffed at the idea that previously backward Japan could ever achieve parity with the West. They wrongly conflated Japanese eagerness for copying all things Western with Japan's permanent inferiority.

The Japanese Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere was officially born in June 1940 to mask Japanese aggression in Manchuria and mainland China, to take over French Indochina a few months later, and to plan a preemptive war against Britain and the United States.

Planning to have control over the oil riches of the Dutch East Indies (modern Indonesia), the rubber of Malaysia, and the mineral wealth of China and Burma, Japan sought complete independence from the West with a so-called "yen bloc" of subservient states.

Satellite Asian clients were expected to overlook Japanese bullying and imperialism in exchange for the advantages of trickle-down wealth from a rising Japanese economy and the paternalistic security offered by the Imperial Japanese Navy and ground forces.

In truth, Japan's Asian subjects soon hated Tokyo even more than they did London or Washington. Yet they made concessions to Japan only because Western appeasement and isolationism precluded active resistance to Japan's rising sun—at least until Pearl Harbor.

China is currently following the Japanese model of the 1930s and early 1940s.

All the parallels are there: claims of Western decline, appeals to Pan-Asian solidarity, the bullying of neighbors, visions of a Chinese-led trading and currency bloc, new westernized Chinese weapons, and boasts that Beijing has combined the best of both Western technology and superior Asian discipline to become the superpower of the future.

China's miraculous transformation from a peasant subsistence culture is even more impressive than was Japan's—given that in 2017, China is a nation of more than 1.3 billion people, as opposed to Japan's prewar population of about 70 million.

In our arrogance and complacency, we once scoffed at the Japanese and their idea of the first Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere—and then suffered what followed.

Are we doing the same thing some 75 years later?

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Political turkeys of the last 12 months

By JONATHAN BERNSTEIN
Bloomberg View

Jonathan Bernstein is a Bloomberg View columnist. He taught political science at the University of Texas at San Antonio and DePauw University and wrote A Plain Blog About Politics.

It's been a tough year for those of us who call ourselves political junkies. That's not to say, however, that we haven't had our share of fun or that we have nothing to be appreciate. One pledge: In composing this item, I had no contact with former Russian Ambassador Kislyak. Never met him. He's certainly not in the room right now as I type this. Nyet! Here's the list of what political junkies can be thankful for in the last 12 months:

Special elections! The chance to play jaded hipster for all true political junkies. First we can be the only kid in the class who knows about, say, the epic GA-6 battle between Karen Handel and Jon Ossoff, then we can dismiss them as less important than "everyone" thinks. Even better _ while y'all are focused on House specials, we can dig deep into the state legislative versions. I still do think "by-election" is a better name for them, though.

Wacky candidates _ such as the (probably?) married couple running against each other for the Montana U.S. Senate seat up next year. Even if they're not the all-time wackiest Montana candidates.

C-SPAN, especially when it picks up local news feeds from foreign elections. Love it. Also love when it sticks with an event after the speeches are over, so we can soak in the handshakes and the ambient noise. The very best C-SPAN. I'll say it again: Brian Lamb is a hero of the republic.

Side players in political scandals. Big scandals invariably provide us with third-tier players who are, well, a hoot and a half. The leading Trump/Russia character so far: Carter Page.

Cronies, hangers-on, and generally unqualified and incompetent people. The administration is filled with them and it is undeniably terrible for the nation. For political junkies, though, there's plenty to enjoy. I'll nominate Sebastian Gorka's dissertation for the prize among this group.

The Senate Class of 2012: I still think the senators up for re-election for the first time this year were an unusually promising group, and they've collectively had a pretty good first term. We'll miss Jeff Flake, who will leave Ted Cruz and Deb Fischer as the only Republicans. Some of the Democrats are at risk, but collectively Chris Murphy, Mazie Hirono, Joe Donnelly, Angus King, Elizabeth Warren, Martin Heinrich, Heidi Heitkamp, Tim Kaine, and Tammy Baldwin remain a formidable group. Together, there's very little dead wood among these twelve Senators.

Election day and election night information: I'll highlight in particular the fine work by Daily Kos Elections, and by Decision Desk HQ.

Dan Drezner's epic twitter thread about White House staff talking about the president as if he was a toddler. Also: Chuck Grassley's twitter feed and Clair McCaskill's twitter feed. And that thing where there's always a perfect old Donald Trump tweet to undermine whatever the new Donald Trump tweet says.

Ridiculous lists of presidential candidates to argue about years before the election. Not saying they're a bad thing (and no one, least of all me, will ever again be able to laugh at anyone who includes seemingly preposterous candidates) _ journalists should cover the invisible primary. Still, while I won't make the mistake of saying that Mark Cuban, Oprah Winfrey, and The Rock are impossible, I'm not putting my money there. But I will enjoy debating it.

And a blast from the past: We'll always have James Traficant. Beam me up!

President turns blind eye to credible accusations against Moore

By REX HUPPKE
Chicago Tribune

Rex Huppke is a columnist for the Chicago Tribune*. Readers may email him at rhuppke@chicagotribune.com.*

Remember these words: "We don't need a liberal person in there, a Democrat."

They mark a moment of immorality from which the Republican Party may not return.

They were spoken, of course, by President Donald Trump, a man who long ago surrendered his own morality to make room for more ego. He was leaving the White House for a Thanksgiving vacation and was asked about Roy Moore, the Republican nominee for U.S. Senate in Alabama, a man who has now been repeatedly accused of hitting on, flirting with, attempting to date and sexually assaulting teenage girls when he was in his 30s.

The allegations against Moore are numerous and credible, and have now been backed up by extensive accounts from others who remember him as a mall-cruising weirdo young women knew to avoid. If you read the reporting done by newspapers in Alabama, it sounds like Moore's predilection for young girls was common knowledge when he was an assistant district attorney in Etowah County.

Does that make him guilty? No. But given the evidence we've seen—much of it coming from Trump supporters in Alabama—shouldn't it disqualify Moore from serving in the U.S. Senate? I think so.

We have seen powerful men—liberals and conservatives—fall in large numbers recently based on accusations of sexual harassment and sexual assault. The evidence against Moore has been no less than that against many of those men.

But Trump says this: "Roy Moore denies it. That's all I can say. He denies it. And by the way, he totally denies it."

But that's not what's impacting Trump's decision to maintain his support for Moore. The president all but admitted it. Speaking of the Senate seat Moore is running to fill, Trump said those words: "We don't need a liberal person in there, a Democrat."

That's all that matters apparently. Trump is just fine with an alleged pervert filling that seat, as long as Moore votes for tax cuts and aligns with Trump's agenda.

That's sick. That's party loyalty taken to a dangerous extreme, and anyone out there who disagrees, please answer this question: If Roy Moore's Democratic opponent, Doug Jones, were the one facing these allegations, if he were the center of one disturbing story after another, would you be OK with Democrats standing behind him? Would a Democratic president voicing his support for such a candidate make you queasy?

Of course it would.

Trump's comments Tuesday showed that our politics have become so focused on winning that a man credibly accused of preying on teenagers can be given the benefit of the doubt.

That's disgusting. And it's worse coming from a president repeatedly accused of sexual misconduct, a president who thinks his denial of those charges—like Moore's denial of the charges against him—is good enough.

None of this is good enough. We deserve better, but the most powerful Republican in the country, one of the most powerful people in the world, is telling us that allegations of sexual misconduct with teenage girls are irrelevant if it will give his party a win.

"We don't need a liberal person in there, a Democrat."

That's a horrifying excuse for throwing the weight of the U.S. presidency behind a man like Roy Moore.

Congress must act on unused military bases

By FREDERICO BARTELS
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Frederico Bartels is a policy analyst specializing in defense budgeting at the Heritage Foundation's Center for National Defense. He wrote this for the Philadelphia Inquirer.

If you could remove 50 channels you never watch from your cable subscription and save $10 a month, you would do it, right?

You have no use for those extra channels, and they probably represent a time drain as you surf through the clutter to find Food Network.

The Pentagon has a similar problem.

According to a Defense Department study released last month, it now has 19 percent more infrastructure than it needs. Roughly one in every five installations the Pentagon owns is idle, yet we _ the nation's taxpayers _ still pay to secure and maintain those facilities.

This excess capacity will not be filled in the future _ not even under plans being considered to rebuild our shrunken military. It's time to cut it loose.

Experience proves that the best way to shed excess military infrastructure is through a process called Base Realignment and Closures, more commonly known by its acronym _ BRAC. Congress can authorize the process to begin at any time. But for the last seven years, it has denied the Pentagon's pleas to start a new round.

When Defense Secretary James Mattis testified in Congress on the department's budget request, he told lawmakers a new round of BRAC likely would save $2 billion each year in maintenance costs. Previous rounds of BRAC already are producing more than $12 billion of savings every year.

Additionally, Mattis noted, a new round of BRAC would help the department improve its readiness and lethality by better locating our forces and right-sizing the infrastructure and its associated costs.

So, why won't Congress act?

Excuses range from the pure parochial desire to protect bases in individual members' districts, to claims that the Pentagon has provided insufficient data documenting the magnitude and costs of the excess. Moreover, a lot of members still have not gotten over some bad experiences with the last BRAC round in 2005.

The 2005 round focused heavily on establishing joint bases _ facilities that host units from two or more of the service branches. The goal of joint basing is to foster integration and interoperability among the branches, however it led to much higher implementation costs than expected.

But joint basing has been absent from all Pentagon proposals for a new round of BRAC and from all the congressional proposals since 2010.

Congress has all the power in this discussion. It can further reduce the likelihood of cost overruns by limiting actions to those that save money in five years, or by establishing specific goals _ e.g., that the department needs to reduce 5 percent of its infrastructure.

Unfortunately, lawmakers did none of that in the 2018 defense authorization bill. Instead, they once again denied the Pentagon the authority to reduce idle infrastructure. It's a decision that forces the department and the American taxpayer to continue to dig deep into their pockets to pay for its upkeep.

Congress can _ and should _ resolve all its reservations about BRAC in the next defense authorization bill. All it will take is a willingness among both lawmakers and Pentagon brass to work together. The leaders of the armed services committees understand the need for a new round of BRAC. All of them, both Democrats and Republicans, are committed to improving how the Pentagon runs.

No one looks forward to calling the cable company. You know they are going to try to talk you out of changes. But if you knew that call would save you a lot of money and trouble every month, you'd make it.

It is time for Congress and the Pentagon to pick up the phone and make that call. They are expected to be good stewards of tax dollars, and BRAC is a step in that direction.

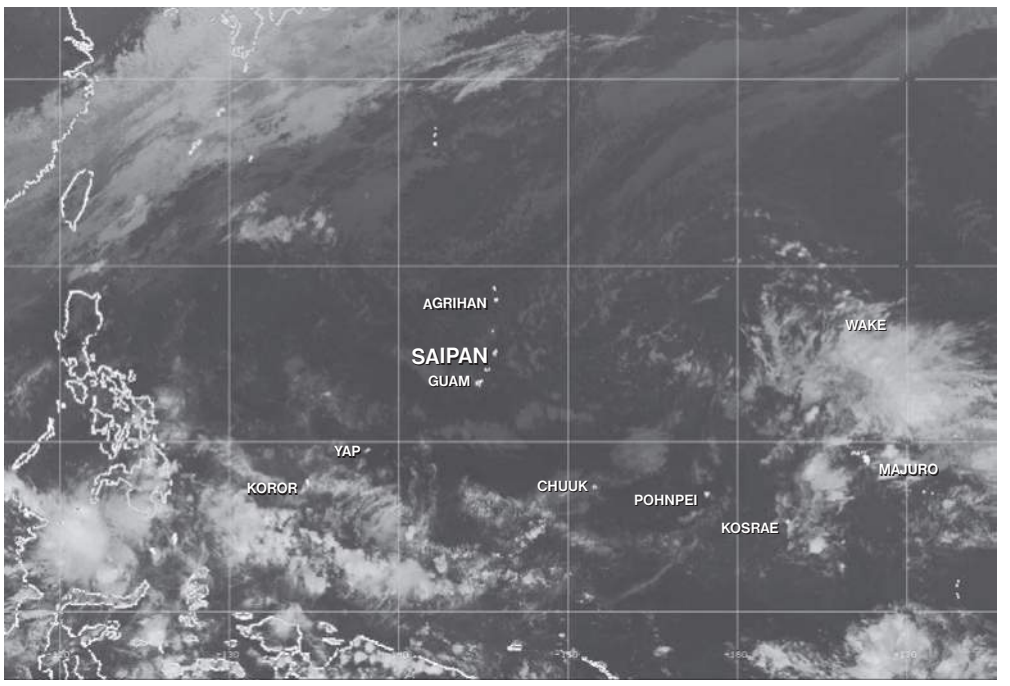
Delaying it will just represent another missed opportunity to save and grow stronger.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼78°	▲88° ▼78°	▲88° ▼78°	▲89° ▼78°	▲89° ▼78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 5:21 AM, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2017
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Both the GFS and the ECMWF take the upper low and move it west into the Marianas Monday night and Tuesday. It should be weakening slowly as it approaches, but the low will have plenty of cold air aloft, resulting in instability that should be favorable for isolated thunderstorms Monday night and Tuesday, and have updated the forecast to reflect that. Otherwise, the rest of the forecast is unchanged.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 77°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	70° / 61°
Beijing	Sunny	45° / 19°
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	77° / 72°
Honolulu	Showers	81° / 72°
London	Showers	48° / 37°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	72° / 54°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	90° / 79°
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	82° / 61°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	77° / 71°
New York	Sunny	51° / 42°
Osaka	Sunny	63° / 52°
Paris	Showers	46° / 43°
Busan	Mostly Sunny	57° / 41°
Rome	Sunny	54° / 36°
Salem	Sunny	64° / 39°
San Francisco	Sunny	59° / 46°
Seoul	Cloudy	46° / 25°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	57° / 46°
Washington, DC	Sunny	53° / 38°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
12:22 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.35
7:26 AM	LOW TIDE	0.29
2:42 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.85
9:17 PM	LOW TIDE	0.91

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:24 AM	5:44 PM
Tuesday	6:25 AM	5:44 PM
Wednesday	6:25 AM	5:44 PM
Thursday	6:26 AM	5:44 PM
Friday	6:27 AM	5:44 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	12:03 am	12:51 pm
Tuesday	-	12:53 am	1:33 pm
Wednesday	-	1:45 am	2:15 pm
Thursday	-	2:39 am	2:59 pm
Friday	-	3:35 am	3:46 pm

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 6, 2017

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA6394	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA6392	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA6391	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA6390	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA6398	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA6396	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA6391	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA6391	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:15pm	7:05pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:10am	6:10am	1, 7
7C3451	4:00am	7:05am	4, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

TW308	2:00am	6:05am	2, 3, 4
OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
TW308	2:35am	6:20am	6, 7
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3403	4:45am	8:30am	Daily
LJ652	3:40am	7:30am	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3401	4:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:30am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:00am	10:25am	1
JD396	4:50pm	8:15pm	4

SAIPAN-NANJING (NKG)

XP889	4:45pm	10:30pm	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	10:55am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:55am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA6394/191	4:15am	9:00am	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	8:10am	7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	1, 3, 4, 6 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6398/193	6:05pm	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	2:00am	5:00am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA6398/159	6:05pm	11:00pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA6393	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA6395	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA6391	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA6390	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA6397	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA6399	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA6390	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA6390	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:30am	3:00pm	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:00pm	2:10am+1	4
7C3452	9:05pm	2:10am+1	3, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	9:30am	3:00pm	Daily
TW307	7:45pm	1:00am+1	1, 2, 3
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
TW307	8:05pm	1:35am+1	5, 6
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
LJ651	9:10pm	2:40am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:10am	3:30pm	4
JD395	10:05pm	5:30am+1	7

NANJING (NKG)-SAIPAN

XP888	9:35pm	4:00am+1	1, 4, 6

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:25pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/6395	12:40am	8:05am	3, 6 via GUM
UA190/6397	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/UA6395	10:05pm	8:05am+1	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA192/6395	10:30pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via ROR-GUM
UA184/6395	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:20pm	12:30am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/6395	11:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, LJ Jin Air, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express, XP XTRA Airways; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

MVA welcomes Japan MICE group

Management and staff of Kyoritsu Denki Group and flight crew of Japan Airlines arrive at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport on Nov. 22, 2017, on a chartered MICE tour. MVA

Visitors from Japan aboard a chartered Japan Airlines' flight for Kyoritsu Denki Group and aboard Delta Air Lines regularly scheduled flight are welcomed at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport on Nov. 22, 2017. MVA

On behalf of the Marianas Visitors Authority, Sarah Moana J. Somorang presents shell leis to visitors from Japan aboard a chartered Japan Airlines' flight for Kyoritsu Denki Group and aboard Delta Air Lines regularly scheduled flight at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport on Nov. 22, 2017. Also pictured are PMT general manager Masato Tezuka, MVA acting marketing manager Brenda Repeki, and MVA marketing specialist Keoni Hosono. MVA

On behalf of the Marianas Visitors Authority, Jenalien B. Jonothan presents shell leis to visitors from Japan aboard a chartered Japan Airlines' flight for Kyoritsu Denki Group and aboard Delta Air Lines regularly scheduled flight at Saipan International Airport on Nov. 22, 2017. MVA

On behalf of the Marianas Visitors Authority, Jenalien B. Jonathan, left, and Sarah Moana J. Somorang, right, presents shell leis to visitors from Japan aboard a chartered Japan Airlines' flight for Kyoritsu Denki Group and aboard Delta Air Lines regularly scheduled flight at Saipan International Airport on Nov. 22, 2017. MVA

On Nov. 22, the Marianas Visitors Authority welcomed the first of nearly 400 Japanese visitors arriving this week on Japan Airlines as part of a company tour.

The MVA sent an entourage to Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport to welcome the Kyoritsu Denki Group travelling for what is termed in the industry as MICE, which means travel involving meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions.

Tour company Pacific Micronesia Tours, a subsidiary of Japan's JTB Corp., is providing ground handling for the two charter flights scheduled to arrive from Shizuoka, Japan, on Nov. 22 and Nov. 24.

"We do receive small groups of 20 or 30 from Japan, but when it comes to larger groups, it's really difficult for the travel agent in Japan to make airseat reservation (on the one daily flight), so they chose to charter on Japan Airlines," Masato Tezuka, president of Tasi Tours, who was also on hand to personally greet the group. "We're very excited, very pleased to have this kind of group coming from Japan. We will try to do our best to welcome them."

Tezuka said PMT is also availing of the MVA's MICE incentive program to support the tour.

"The arrival of Kyoritsu Denki Group is significant in that the company wanted to visit the Marianas enough to charter a plane to bring their employees. Interestingly, I was also told Shizuoka is a historical fishing community with some ties to the Marianas," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "We hope this will be the start of an incremental increase in similar flights. Certainly, the MVA will continue our all-out efforts to rebuild our Japan market and let Japanese visitors know they are still warmly welcomed in the Marianas."

The flights were scheduled to bring 198 passengers and 185 passengers on Nov. 22 and 24, respectively. ***(MVA)***

PACIFIC ISLANDS CLUB SAIPAN

We are seeking for high energy individuals with a positive, can do attitude.
Pacific Islands Club, Saipan is inviting qualified, U.S. workers to apply for the following positions:

(2) AIR CONDITIONING MECHANIC
Minimum of four (4) years of relevant work experience. Must be able to work evenings, weekends and holidays.

(2) BARTENDER
Minimum one (1) year work experience; Must be at least 21 years old. Ability to speak Chinese, Korean, Russian or Japanese is preferred. Must be able to work evenings, weekends and holidays.

(2) BUILDING MAINTENANCE
Minimum of three (3) years related work experience. Must be able to work evenings, weekends and holidays.

(1) CHEF DE PARTIE (CHINESE CUISINE)
Minimum of three (3) years of experience in overseeing the production of Chinese cuisine for hotels, restaurants or banquets. Must have strong knowledge of Chinese cuisine. Plus one (1) year of supervisory experience. Must have good management and organizational skills. Must have the ability to work independently and within a team, and have the ability to work well under pressure. Must have excellent communication skills. Must be able to work evenings, weekends, and holidays.

CLUBMATES
Must have previous related work experience and must pass all American Red Cross Lifeguard requirements (including a 300 yard continuous swim test); Sports-minded individuals are encouraged to apply; Must possess good verbal and written communication skills; Korean, Japanese and/or Russian language skill is a plus; Paid training and free two year lifeguard certification course for eligible candidates; Must be able to work on evenings, weekends and holidays.

(1) ELECTRICIAN
Minimum of five (5) years work experience. Must be able to work shifts, weekends, and holidays.

(2) GARDENER
Minimum of three (3) months of work experience. Must have working knowledge of landscaping. Must be able to work evenings, weekends and holidays.

(1) GUEST RELATIONS
Minimum of one (1) year hospitality experience. Must have the ability to solve guest concerns and cash handling. Must be able to speak, read and write in English and one or more of the following languages: Korean, Russian, Japanese or Chinese. Must be able to work evenings, weekends, and holidays.

(1) HVAC TECHNICIAN
Minimum of four (4) years related work experience. Must be able to work evenings, weekends, and holidays.

(1) POWERHOUSE OPERATOR
Minimum of three (3) years related work experience. Certified Water Treatment & Distribution operator preferred. Must be a certified Class A/B UST operator. Must be able to work evenings, weekends and holidays.

(1) POWERHOUSE SUPERVISOR
Minimum of three (3) years experience in diesel power generator operations and one (1) year of supervisory experience. Must be a certified Water Treatment operator Class 2 and Water Distribution Class 1. Must be certified Class A/B UST operator. Must be able to work on evenings, weekends and holidays.

(2) PUBLIC AREA ATTENDANT
Minimum of three (3) to six (6) months of work experience. Must be able to work evenings, weekends and holidays.

(3) ROOM ATTENDANT – Full Time
Minimum of one (1) year of experience as a room attendant for a hotel. Motivated, self-starter responsible for cleaning up to 18 rooms per shift. Must have the ability to bend, lift, carry & move items weighing 50 pounds. Must be able to stand for long excessive hours. Must be able to work graveyard shifts, evenings, weekends and holidays.

(1) ROOM ATTENDANT – Part Time
Minimum of one (1) year of experience as a room attendant for a hotel. Motivated, self-starter responsible for cleaning up to 18 rooms per shift. Must have the ability to bend, lift, carry & move items weighing 50 pounds. Must be able to stand for long excessive hours. Must be able to work graveyard shifts, evenings, weekends and holidays.

SHALLOW WATER LIFEGUARDS
Must have previous related work experience and must pass all American Red Cross Shallow Water Lifeguard requirements (including a 100 yard continuous swim test and tread water for two minutes using only the legs). Sports-minded individuals are encouraged to apply. Paid training and free two year lifeguard certification course for eligible candidates. Must be able to work on evenings, weekends and holidays. Must possess good verbal and written communication skills.

(1) STORE ROOM CLERK
Must have a high school diploma or higher. Must have knowledge in receiving, checking, storing, issuing and conducting physical inventory count. Must have the ability to lift, carry, push, reach and handle supplies weighing 50-75 lbs. Must be able to speak, read and comprehend the English language. Must be proficient in computer and Microsoft Excel programs. Must be able to work weekdays, weekends and holidays.

Applications must be received by 5:00pm on Saturday, December 2, 2017.
PIC applications are available at the PIC Security Desk by the Loading Dock/Employee Entrance.
Incomplete applications will NOT be accepted or considered.
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Business

Shoppers out seeking deals, though sales have crept earlier

By BERNARD CONDON and ANNE D'INNOCENZIO
AP BUSINESS WRITERS

Aaron Mizerny, 9, shops at the toy section at Target in Ballwin, Mo., Friday, Nov. 24, 2017. AP

Parking lots were full and shopping bags were plentiful in some places Saturday as holiday gift-seekers were out looking for bargains, even as the competition among retailers to offer earlier deals and snag customers first has pulled sales forward.

At the Woodbury Common outlets north of New York City, retail expert Craig R. Johnson was impressed by how many people were there—though crowds were still not as heavy as several years ago before online shopping was such a draw.

"Some stores like Nike had like a hundred people in the checkout line," said Johnson, president of consulting group Customer Growth Partners. "Virtually everyone there was carrying a bag—one or two or three or more."

As shoppers said stores also seemed less crowded on Black Friday than in earlier years, data from Adobe Analytics, the research arm of software maker Adobe, showed that a record $5.03 billion was spent online by the end of the day, an increase of nearly 17 percent from a year earlier.

It said the top-selling items on Black Friday included the Nintendo Switch, Hatchimals and Colleggtibles toys, PJ Masks items, LOL Surprise dolls, Ride On Cars, as well as Chromecast and Roku streaming devices.

In addition to the online effect, Johnson cited the fact that more stores are opening on Thanksgiving, and that is "pulling" traffic from the holiday weekend. J.C. Penney stores opened at 2 p.m. on Thanksgiving, an hour earlier than last year and at least three hours ahead of its department store rivals. Many stores offered deals online all week.

Research firm ShopperTrak said Saturday that preliminary data for Thanksgiving Day and Black Friday found that shopper visits to brick-and-mortar stores declined a combined 1.6 percent when compared to the same days in 2016. It said Black Friday 2017 shopper visits decreased less than 1 percent when compared to a year earlier, and that the decision by some stores to close on Thanksgiving this year helped shift customer visits to other days.

Shoppers are expected to spend at least 3.6 percent more in November and December than they did last holiday season—in line with last year's bump. Johnson called that "good, solid" growth, though less than was the case in three boom years through 2006 when sales in the last two months of the year leapt 6 percent or more.

At the Garden State Plaza in Paramus, New Jersey, where parking lots were full, J.C. Penney was offering storewide sales like up to 40 percent off on major appliances and on women's clothing. The chain was also trying to make shopping in person more exciting, with a DJ in the store.

Jason Noda, 29, bought a pair of boots for himself on sale at the Garden State Plaza. He said he wasn't "super impressed" with the sales on Saturday, and said he buys mostly online but likes being at stores to get ideas.

"I like going to stores, but I can find anything online," he said. He does plan to try ordering a product and picking it up in the store, a tactic that retailers are increasingly using. "It's immediate," he said.

That's one strategy Johnson thinks will be a success this holiday season for Walmart, which is encouraging shoppers to order goods online, then take a quick trip to one of its stores to pick them up. He called the "click and carry" idea a "big, competitive weapon" for Walmart in its fight against Amazon.

Risky stalemate as science battles human fears at Fukushima

ONAHAMA, Japan (AP)—More than six years after a tsunami overwhelmed the Fukushima nuclear power plant, Japan has yet to reach consensus on what to do with a million tons of radioactive water, stored on site in around 900 large and densely packed tanks that could spill should another major earthquake or tsunami strike.

The stalemate is rooted in a fundamental conflict between science and human nature.

Experts advising the government have urged a gradual release to the nearby Pacific Ocean. Treatment has removed all the radioactive elements except tritium, which they say is safe in small amounts. Conversely, if the tanks break, their contents could slosh out in an uncontrolled way.

Local fishermen are balking. The water, no matter how clean, has a dirty image for consumers, they say. Despite repeated tests showing most types of fish caught off Fukushima are safe to eat, diners remain hesitant. The fishermen fear any release would sound the death knell for their nascent and still fragile recovery.

"People would shun Fukushima fish again as soon as the water is released," said Fumio Haga, a drag-net fisherman from Iwaki, a city about 50 kilometers (30 miles) down the coast from the nuclear plant.

And so the tanks remain.

Fall is high season for saury and flounder, among Fukushima's signature fish. It was once a busy time of year when coastal fishermen were out every morning.

Then came March 11, 2011. A 9 magnitude offshore earthquake triggered a tsunami that killed more than 18,000 people along Japan's northeast coast. The quake and massive flooding knocked out power for the cooling systems at the Fukushima nuclear plant. Three of the six reactors had partial meltdowns. Radiation spewed into the air, and highly contaminated water ran into the Pacific.

Today, only about half of the region's 1,000 fishermen go out, and just twice a week because of reduced demand. They participate in a fish testing program.

Lab technicians mince fish samples at Onahama port in Iwaki, pack them in a cup for inspection and record details such as who caught the fish and where. Packaged fish sold at supermarkets carry official "safe" stickers.

Only three kinds of fish passed the test when the experiment began in mid-2012, 15 months after the tsunami. Over time, that number has increased to about 100.

The fish meet what is believed to be the world's most stringent requirement: less than half the radioactive cesium level allowed under Japan's national standard and one-twelfth of the U.S. or EU limit, said Yoshiharu Nemoto, a senior researcher at the Onahama testing station.

That message isn't reaching consumers. A survey by Japan's Consumer Agency in October found that nearly half of Japanese weren't aware of the tests, and that consumers are more likely to focus on alarming information about possible health impacts in extreme cases, rather than facts about radiation and safety standards.

Fewer Japanese consumers shun fish and other foods from Fukushima than before, but one in five still do, according to the survey. The coastal catch of 2,000 tons last year was 8 percent of pre-disaster levels. The deep-sea catch was half of what it used to be, though scientists say there is no contamination risk that far out.

Naoya Sekiya, a University of Tokyo expert on disaster information and social psychology, said that the water from the nuclear plant shouldn't be released until people are well-informed about the basic facts and psychologically ready.

1 job, 2 people: Who'll be in charge at consumer agency?

By BERNARD CONDON
AP BUSINESS WRITER

Who's the boss? That's the awkward question after the departing head of a government agency charged with looking after consumer rights appointed a deputy to temporarily fill his spot. The White House then named its own interim leader.

One job, two people—and two very different views on how to do it.

The first pick is expected to continue the aggressive policing of banks and other lenders that have angered Republicans. The second, President Donald Trump's choice, has called the agency a "joke," an example of bureaucracy run amok, and is expected to dismantle much of what the agency has done.

So come Monday, who will be leading the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau?

Senior Trump administration officials said Saturday that the law was on their side and they expect no trouble when Trump's pick for temporary director of the CFPB shows up for work. Departing director Richard Cordray, an Obama appointee long criticized by congressional Republicans as overzealous, had cited a different rule in saying the law was on his side.

In tendering his resignation Friday, Cordray elevated Leandra English, who was the agency's chief of staff, into the deputy director position. Citing the Dodd-Frank Act that created the CFPB, he said English, an ally, would become acting director upon his departure.

Corday's move was widely seen as an attempt to stop Trump from shaping the agency in the months ahead.

The White House cites the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998. Administration officials on Saturday acknowledged that some other laws appear to clash with Vacancies Act, but said that in this case the president's authority takes precedence.

Who prevails in the legal wrangling is seen as important even though this involves just a temporary posting. Getting a permanent replacement approved by the Senate could take months.

The president's pick for temporary appointee, Mick Mulvaney, had been widely anticipated. Mulvaney, currently director of the Office of Management and Budget, has been an outspoken critic of the agency and is expected to pull back on many of Cordray's actions in the six years since he was appointed.

Trump announced he was picking Mulvaney within a few hours of Cordray's announcement on Friday.

Nation

AP
In this Oct. 10, 2017, file photo, the Capitol is seen at sunrise, in Washington. The crush of unfinished business facing lawmakers when they return to the Capitol this week would be daunting even if Washington were functioning at peak efficiency.

Congress coming back to a crush of business

WASHINGTON (AP)—The crush of unfinished business facing lawmakers when they return to the Capitol would be daunting even if Washington were functioning at peak efficiency.

It's an agenda whose core items—tax cuts, a potential government shutdown, lots of leftover spending bills—could unravel just as easily as advance in factionalism, gamesmanship and a toxic political environment.

There's only a four-week window until a Christmas deadline, barely enough time for complicated negotiations even if December stays on the rails. And that's hardly a sure bet in President Donald Trump's capital.

Trump and congressional leaders plan a meeting Tuesday to discuss how to sidestep a shutdown and work though the legislative to-do list.

For the optimistic, it's plain that Democrats and Republicans have reasons to cooperate, particularly on spending increases for the Pentagon and domestic agencies whose budgets otherwise would be frozen. An additional round of hurricane aid should be bipartisan, and efforts to reauthorize a popular health care program for children seem to be on track.

Republicans are advancing their cherished tax cut measure under special rules that mean Senate Democrats cannot use delaying tactics. The measure passed the House just before the Thanksgiving break and moves to the Senate floor this coming week.

After the Senate GOP's failure on health care this summer, the majority party is under enormous pressure to produce a victory on taxes. Still, GOP deficit hawks such as Sens. Bob Corker of Tennessee and Jeff Flake of Arizona remain uneasy about the overhaul.

While Democrats are largely sidelined on taxes, they hold leverage over a mix of budget-related issues.

First, there's the need to avert a government shutdown after a temporary spending bill expires on Dec. 8. The most likely scenario, congressional aides say, is for an additional extension until Christmas. On a parallel track are talks to raise spending limits that are keeping agency budgets essentially frozen unless those caps are raised. If that happens, then negotiations could begin in earnest on a massive catchall spending measure in hopes of having it signed into law by year's end.

Taxes have gotten all the attention so far, but the showdown over a potential shutdown right before Christmas could soon take center stage. Democrats are counting on GOP fears of a holiday season closure to ensure Republican concessions during December talks.

Both sides would have to make concessions that may upset partisans in either party. Just as House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., fears a revolt on the right, House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi of California risks an uprising on her left. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and Senate Minority leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., round out the quartet of top negotiators.

"Everybody's got complicated politics. The chance of short-term failure is pretty high—short-term failure being a shutdown," said Steve Elmendorf, a Democratic lobbyist. "But the four of them, assuming they don't want to shut the government down for a long time, are going to have to come to an accommodation."

Talks on the spending caps are stuck, however, aides say. A GOP offer to lift the Pentagon budget by more than $54 billion next year and nondefense limits by $37 billion was rejected by Democrats demanding balance between the two sides of the ledger.

Long-delayed battles over immigration and Trump's promised wall along the U.S.-Mexico border are huge obstacles. Many Democrats whose votes are needed on the spending bills insist they won't vote for any legislation that includes the wall. Trump remains dead set on his $1.6 billion request for a down payment on the project.

Funeral held for US border agent whose death is not explained

EL PASO, Texas (AP)—Family, friends and law enforcement officers converged on an adobe Catholic church in El Paso, Texas, Saturday to mourn a Border Patrol agent whose death last weekend in the rugged and remote Big Bend area has not been explained.

Bagpipes played as Border Patrol pallbearers in green uniforms carried the U.S. flag-draped coffin of Rogelio Martinez, 36, into Our Lady of Guadalupe Church for a private funeral Mass. He died in a hospital Sunday of head and other injuries.

"It honors him to see law enforcement agencies from across the United States" attend the service, Border Patrol spokesman Ramiro Cordero told reporters outside the church.

Martinez was found Nov. 18 in a culvert along with his seriously injured partner, whose name has not been released, in a rugged area near Van Horn, about 30 miles (50 kilometers) from the border with Mexico and 110 miles (175 kilometers) southeast of El Paso.

Attorney General Jeff Session was scheduled to attend the funeral but it was not clear if he was there. Following the funeral, a graveside ceremony was held at Restlawn Cemetery in El Paso.

Speculation about the cause of death has run rampant with several politicians saying the agent was attacked, including President Donald Trump, who used the death to highlight his support for building a wall on the border with Mexico. Special Agent in Charge Emmerson Buie Jr. in the FBI's El Paso office has said investigators were treating the incident as a "potential assault," but they could not rule out other scenarios.

Representatives from the border patrol's union have insisted that the incident was an attack, based on the accounts of other agents who responded to the scene. Chris Cabrera, a spokesman for the National Border Patrol Council, told The Associated Press that agents responding to the scene called it "grisly."

However, a U.S. official with knowledge of the investigation told The Associated Press on Monday that the agents may have fallen, and that the surviving agent had no memory of his duty-shift. The official spoke on condition of anonymity and is not authorized to speak publicly.

After the death of Martinez, his father told the El Paso Times that his son loved his job. Jose Martinez said his son would call him every day to say goodbye for the night.

"And I would tell him, 'Take care of yourself son. God bless you,'" the father said.

ACROSS THE NATION

Man who survived Las Vegas shooting killed in hit-and-run

LAS VEGAS (AP)—A man who survived the Oct. 1 mass shooting that killed 58 concert-goers and injured hundreds in Las Vegas has been killed in a hit-and-run in southern Nevada. Roy McClellan of Las Vegas was killed Nov. 17 while hitchhiking on State Route 160 in Pahrump, about 50 miles (80 kilometers) west of Las Vegas. His widow, Denise McClellan, told KSNV-TV she can't understand why her 52-year-old husband survived the shooting, only to die in a hit-and-run. She says the mass shooting "was messing with his head" and that he was undergoing therapy. The Nevada Highway Patrol says it is seeking the driver of a Chevrolet Camaro with front-end damage. Stephen Paddock unleashed gunfire at an outdoor music festival from the 32nd floor of the Mandalay Bay hotel-casino before killing himself.

2 sailors from Florida, 1 from Louisiana die in crash

MIAMI (AP)—The U.S. Navy says two sailors from Florida and another from Louisiana died in an aircraft crash in the Philippine Sea. In a news release, the Navy's 7th Fleet said the families of Lt. Steven Combs and Airman apprentice Bryan Grosso of Florida and airman Matthew Chialastri of Louisiana were notified of their deaths following the Wednesday crash. The C-2A "Greyhound" transport aircraft was traveling to the USS Ronald Reagan when it crashed. Eight people were rescued. U.S. and Japanese ships searched for the three missing sailors. "Their service and sacrifice will be lasting," said Vice Adm. Phil Sawyer, commander of the 7th Fleet. The release didn't provide hometowns for the men, but all three were assigned to the Ronald Reagan. The Navy is investigating the cause of the crash.

NRA, hunting group say grizzly bear hunts needed for safety

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP)—The National Rifle Association and a sport hunting group want to ensure their members can hunt grizzly bears in the three-state region around Yellowstone National Park after the animals lost U.S. protections. Idaho, Montana and Wyoming are considering limited trophy hunts for grizzlies outside the park in future years after the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service revoked the species' threatened status in July. Conservation groups have sued to restore protections, and now the NRA and Safari Club International have asked U.S. District Judge Dana Christensen to let them intervene in the case. Several of the groups' members said in affidavits submitted by their attorneys that hunting would help the region's economy, allow states to better manage the animals and improve public safety.

Asia

Nepalese vote in 1st provincial polls amid democracy hopes

CHAUTARA, Nepal (AP)—Nepalese in mountain villages and foothill towns voted Sunday in the Himalayan nation's first provincial polls that promise to bring government closer to rural and remote areas.

Some 3.2 million voters were choosing lawmakers in seven newly-formed federal states as well as the national assembly and turnout is expected to be high.

The lawmakers who are elected on Sunday and Dec. 7 in the remaining part of the country will be able to name their states, draft provincial laws and choose local leaders.

"The central government is finally moving to our region. We will be closer to the government now with the state assemblies," said schoolteacher Swasthani Thapa, who was among the voters lining outside the polling station at Chautara, 80 kilometers (50 miles) east of Kathmandu, even before it opened at 7 a.m.

Chautara was one of the areas hardest hit by the 2015 earthquake. People in the mountain regions complained they did not get enough help from the central government because their voices were not heard. Two years later, destroyed and damaged houses are still scattered around Chautara and surrounding areas.

"This is a historic day for us. The setting up of states will give final shape to the democracy process, which should finally bring stability and development for our country," said businessman Surya Lal Shrestha.

AP

An election commission official prepares for legislative elections in Chautara, Sindupalchowk, 80 kilometers (50 miles) east of Kathmandu, Nepal, Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017.

Nepal's slow path to democracy began in 2006, when protesters forced the king to give up his rule. Two years later, Nepal officially abolished the centuries-old monarchy and decided that a federal system would best deliver services to all corners of the nation, which remains one of the poorest in the world.

But bickering among political parties delayed until 2015 the implementation of the new constitution, which declared Nepal a republic.

Security has been stepped with thousands of police and army soldiers deployed for the elections. According to the Home Ministry, more than 400 people were detained in days leading up to the vote.

Soon after the constitution was implemented in 2015, protests by ethnic groups in southern Nepal turned violent and left some 50 people dead.

The ethnic Madhesi groups protested for months saying they did not get enough territory in the province assigned to them. They said they deserved more land because they represented a bigger population. Their protest blocked the border with India for months, cutting off fuel and other supplies in Nepal.

Report: N. Korea replaces border guards following defection

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea appears to have replaced all of its guards at a jointly patrolled border area where a North Korean soldier defected last week under a hail of gunfire, according to South Korean media. Military officials said Friday they could not confirm the report.

Yonhap news agency cited an unnamed intelligence source saying there were "signs" the North had replaced its entire security force of 35 to 40 men at the Joint Security Area. South Korea's Defense Ministry and the U.S.-led United Nations Command said they couldn't confirm it.

The source also told Yonhap the North seems to have temporarily closed a bridge over which the defector drove a military jeep to reach the border before his dramatic escape on foot last Monday. The source said the North could be preparing to install a security gate at the bridge for strengthening its screening of personnel coming in and out of the area.

A photo posted on the Twitter account of the acting U.S. ambassador to South Korea, Marc Knapper, showed North Korean workers using shovels to dig what Knapper said was a trench at the spot where the defector crossed the border.

According to South Korea's military, four North Korean soldiers using handguns and AK-47 assault rifles fired about 40 rounds at the defector, who rushed across the line that divides the Koreas after getting his vehicle stuck in a ditch. He was shot five times and is now recovering at a hospital near Seoul where he was operated twice to repair internal organ damage and other injuries.

South Korean soldiers did not fire back, but the incident occurred amid animosity over North Korea's accelerating nuclear weapons and missile test programs. While North Korea often reacts with intense anger over high-profile defections, the country's state media have remained silent on the latest case as of Friday.

After investigating the incident, the U.N. Command said Wednesday it concluded that North Korea violated the armistice agreement ending the 1950-53 Korean War because its soldiers fired across and physically crossed the border in pursuit of the defector. It said officials notified the North's military of these violations and requested a meeting to discuss the investigation results and measures to prevent such violations.

The JSA is jointly overseen by the American-led U.N. Command and by North Korea, with South Korean and North Korean border guards facing each other only meters (feet) apart. It is located inside the 4-kilometer (2 1/2-mile) -wide Demilitarized Zone, which forms the de facto border between the Koreas since the Korean War.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Afghan airstrike kills Taliban commander: official

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—An Afghan airstrike killed a Taliban commander and five of his family members in the northeastern Kapisa province on Friday, an Afghan official said. The strike was launched early morning in Nijrab district, killing Taliban commander Dilawar Khan and two women and three children from his family, said Qais Qaderi, a spokesman for the province's governor. He said authorities were also searching for Khan's brother who apparently escaped during the strike. He said Khan was firing shots at Afghan helicopters from his home before the airstrike.

Bali volcano erupts but flights operating normally

KARANGASEM, Indonesia (AP)—A volcano on the Indonesian island of Bali has rumbled into life with a series of eruptions that temporarily disrupted some international flights to the popular tourist destination. Mount Agung erupted on Saturday evening and three times early Sunday, lighting its cone with an orange glow and sending ash 4,000 meters (13,000 feet) into the atmosphere. The ash clouds have been moving toward the neighboring island of Lombok, a direction that is away from Bali's airport, where nearly all scheduled domestic and international flights were continuing Sunday. Australian airline Jetstar, which canceled nine flights to and from Bali on Saturday evening, said most of its flights will operate normally Sunday after its senior pilots assessed it was safe to fly. However it warned that the movement of ash cloud is highly unpredictable and flights could still be canceled at short notice. Virgin, KLM and Air Asia Malaysia also canceled several flights Saturday.

China closing main road connection with North Korea

BEIJING (AP)—China is temporarily closing its main road connection with North Korea, an official said Friday. Foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said the China-North Korea Friendship Bridge across the Yalu River at the Chinese city of Dandong will be closed while North Korea repairs the approach road on its side. Geng said that "after the maintenance, the bridge will reopen for passage," but gave no date for the reopening or other details. The bridge closure comes after state-owned airline Air China suspended flights Tuesday between Beijing and North Korea due to a lack of demand, deepening the North's isolation amid mounting U.N. sanctions. Beijing is North Korea's only significant ally but has grown increasingly frustrated over its nuclear and missile tests that have brought a threat of war and chaos to China's northeastern border.

World

Survivors recall attack on mosque in Egypt's Sinai, 305 dead

ISMAILIA, Egypt (AP)—They arrived in five SUVs, took positions across from the mosque's door and windows, and just as the imam was about to deliver his Friday sermon from atop the pulpit, they opened fire and tossed grenades at the estimated 500 worshippers inside. When the violence finally stopped, more than 300 people, including 27 children, had been killed and 128 injured.

As the gunfire rang out and the blasts shook the mosque, worshippers screamed and cried out in pain. A stampede broke out in the rush toward a door leading to the washrooms. Others tried desperately to force their way out of the windows.

Those who survived spoke of children screaming as they saw parents and older brothers mowed down by gunfire or shredded by the blasts. Some marveled at their narrow escape from a certain death. Some families lost all or most male members in the massacre.

So composed were the militants that they methodically checked their victims for any sign of life after the initial round of blazing gunfire. Those still moving or breathing received a bullet to the head or the chest, the witnesses said. When the ambulances arrived they shot at them, repelling them as they got back into their vehicles and fled.

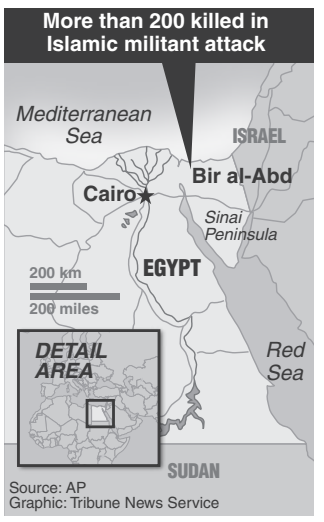
Friday's assault was Egypt's deadliest attack by Islamic extremists in the country's modern history, a grim milestone in a long-running fight against an insurgency led by a local affiliate of the Islamic State group. Al-Rawdah Mosque was in a sleepy village by the same name in Egypt's troubled northern Sinai, near the small town of Bir al-Abd.

A statement by the country's chief prosecutor, Nabil Sadeq, said the attackers, some masked, numbered between 25 and 30. Those with bare faces sported heavy beards and long hair, it added. Clad in military-style camouflage pants and black T-shirts, one of them carried a black banner with the declaration of the Muslim faith—there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet. The banner matched those carried by IS, which has not claimed responsibility for the attack.

They also torched seven cars parked outside the mosque that belonged to worshippers, the statement added.

AP

Discarded shoes of victims remain outside Al-Rawda Mosque in Bir al-Abd northern Sinai, Egypt. a day after attackers killed hundreds of worshippers, on Saturday, Nov. 25, 2017.



The chief prosecutor's statement was the most detailed account given by authorities and it generally agreed with what witnesses told The Associated Press on Saturday in the Suez Canal city of Ismailia, where some of the wounded are hospitalized.

"We knew that the mosque was under attack by (militants)," said witness Ebid Salem Mansour recalling the intense gunfire. Mansour, a 38-year-old worker in a nearby salt factory, said he had settled in Bir al-Abd three years ago to escape the bloodshed and fighting elsewhere in northern Sinai. He suffered two gunshot wounds to his legs on Friday.

"Everyone lay down on the floor and kept their heads down. If you raised your head you get shot," he said. "The shooting was random and hysterical at the beginning and then became more deliberate. Whoever they weren't sure was dead or still breathing was shot dead."

The militants were shouting Allahu Akbar, or God is great, as they fired at the worshippers and the children were screaming, Mansour added. "I knew I was injured but I was in a situation that was much scarier than being wounded. I was only seconds away from a certain death," he said. Amid the shooting many worshippers recited their final prayers, he added.

Friday's attack targeted a mosque frequented by Sufis, members of a mystic movement within Islam. Islamic militants, including the local IS affiliate, consider Sufis heretics because of their less literal interpretations of the faith.

President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi vowed that the attack "will not go unpunished" and that Egypt would persevere with its war on terrorism. He did not specify what new steps might be taken. On Saturday, he ordered that a mausoleum be built in memory of the victims of Friday's attack and cancelled a visit to the Gulf Sultanate of Oman that was scheduled for next week.

The military and security forces have already been waging a tough and costly campaign against militants in the towns, villages and desert mountains of northern Sinai, and Egypt has been in a state of emergency since April. Across the country, thousands have been arrested in a crackdown on suspected Islamists as well as against other dissenters and critics, raising concerns about human rights violations.

Seeking to spread the violence, militants over the past year have carried out deadly bombings on churches in the capital of Cairo and other cities, killing dozens of Christians. The IS affiliate is also believed to be behind the 2016 downing of a Russian passenger jet that killed 224 people over Sinai, an incident that decimated the country's already ailing tourism industry.

WORLD BRIEFS

Lebanese Druze leader calls on Iran and Saudi Arabia to talk

BEIRUT (AP)—A leading Lebanese politician is calling on Saudi Arabia to have a dialogue with Iran in order to reduce regional tensions. Druze leader Walid Jumblatt tweeted Saturday that the modernization of the kingdom led by the powerful Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman cannot be successful as the war in Yemen continues. Sunni powerhouse Saudi Arabia and predominantly Shiite Iran are fighting proxy wars in the Middle East. In an interview published Friday in the New York Times, the crown prince referred to Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei as the "new Hitler." Lebanon was thrown into a political crisis after the Nov. 4 resignation of Prime Minster Saad Hariri in a televised statement read from the Saudi capital, Riyadh. Hariri has since returned to Lebanon and put his resignation on hold.

Greek air force officer kills self, twin boys in fire

ATHENS, Greece (AP)—Greek police say an air force non-commissioned officer has set fire to his apartment, killing himself and his 8-year-old twin boys. Greece's fire service said Saturday that the father and his children were found unresponsive because of the smoke that overwhelmed them and declared dead upon arriving at a hospital. Police who searched the apartment said they found a note scrawled on the wall with a felt pen, reading "I'm tired of you all" as well as several post-it notes, including a rant against the man's stepfather-in-law. The 43-year-old man had been divorced from his wife, who recently had been granted custody of the twins. The children were on scheduled visit with their father. Police say the man had locked the door to the children's bedroom so they couldn't escape.

Abducted Mexican human rights official found alive

MEXICO CITY (AP)—A human rights official in the Mexican state of Jalisco was found alive Saturday, a day after his apparent kidnapping generated worries about the safety of rights workers in the country. A statement from Mexico's National Human Rights Commission called the news "encouraging," adding that the investigation into what happened would continue. The statement did not name the official or provide details of how he was found. Authorities said gunmen stopped the official on Friday as he was driving to the offices of the state rights commission and apparently kidnapped him. It was the second attack on rights workers in less than a week. On Monday, gunmen in Baja California Sur state shot to death the head of that state's human rights commission, Silvestre de la Toba Camacho and his son as they were driving.

Zimbabwean minister describes raid during military takeover

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP)—Zimbabwe's former finance minister testified Saturday that armed, masked men in uniform abducted him from his home during the military operation leading to the ouster of longtime leader Robert Mugabe and held him for a week in an unidentified location, fueling debate about the legality of the popular, mostly peaceful takeover by the armed forces.

The account by Ignatius Chombo came a day after a High Court judge, a retired general, ruled that the military's actions last week, which commanders described as a move against "criminals" around Mugabe, were legal. While some critics said it set a dangerous precedent, the decision by Judge George Chiweshe reinforced the military's assertion that it acted within the law even though it set off events, including impeachment proceedings and street demonstrations against the 93-year-old Mugabe, that ended his 37-year rule.

The joyful inauguration on Friday of President Emmerson Mnangagwa, a former top aide to Mugabe, showed that most Zimbabweans are happy to have a new leader who might take steps to revive the shattered economy and grant them more freedoms. Even so, perceptions that the abrupt political transition was constitutionally sound are important to Zimbabwe's new leadership, which must prepare for 2018 elections and seeks to attract foreign investment.

However, Chombo and two leaders of the ruling ZANU-PF party's youth league who said they were abducted by the military before being handed over days later to the police described experiences reminiscent of human rights violations that were a routine occurrence during Mugabe's rule. The three men have been linked to a party faction loyal to Mugabe's wife, Grace, whose presidential ambitions triggered the military intervention.

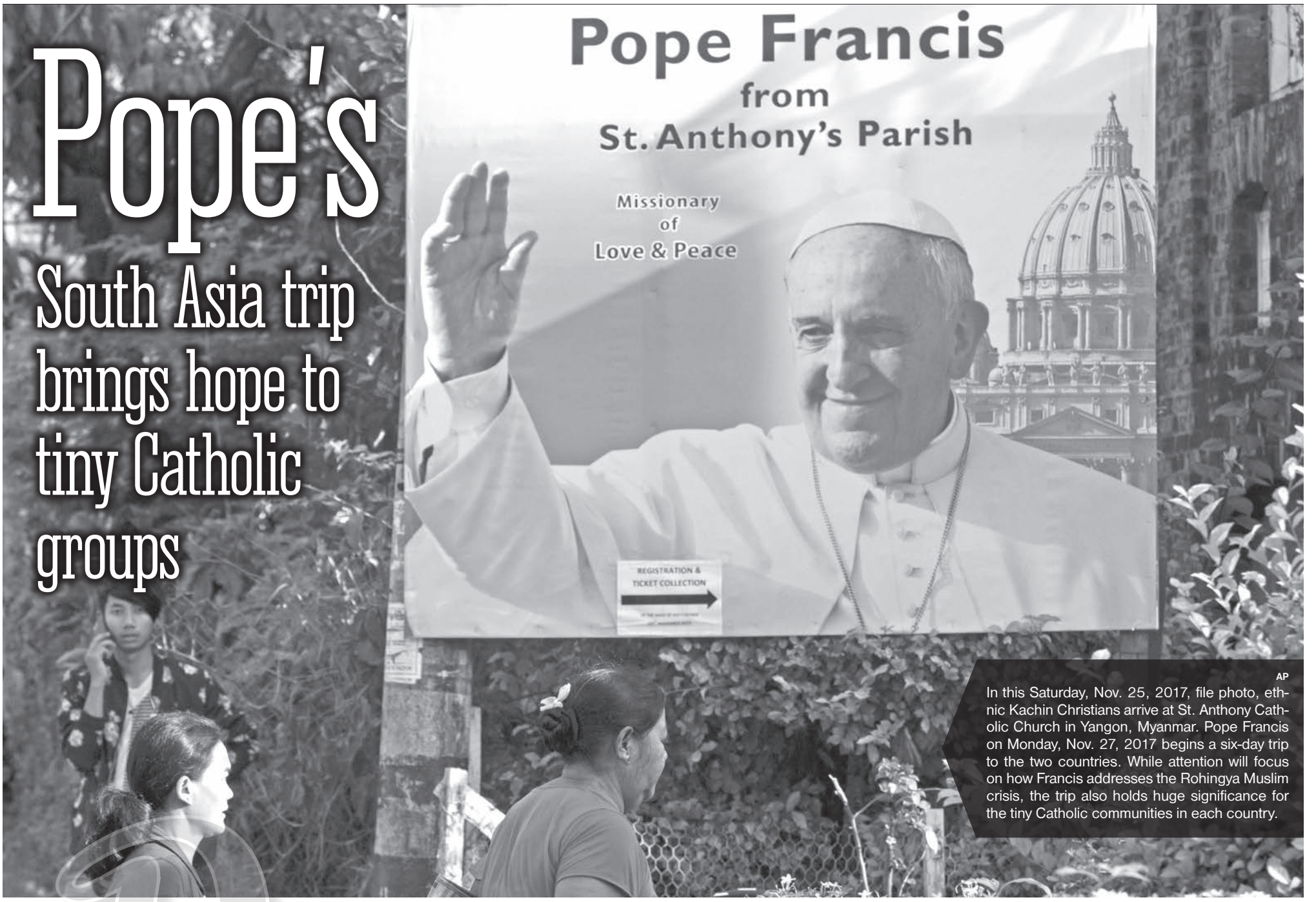
"I was in the custody of armed persons who were dressed in soldiers' uniforms," said Chombo, who has been charged with corruption. "I don't know where I was taken to."

He described in court how the raid in the early morning of Nov. 15 began with two explosions, one of which shook his home. Men entered his bedroom with AK-47 assault rifles pointed at him, his wife and his maid, then handcuffed and hustled him out of the house through a smashed living room window, blindfolding him with his own T-shirt, Chombo said.

A one-hour drive to an unidentified location led to days of custody during which interrogators told him that he had performed badly in his role as a government official and ruling party leader, he said. He said he was blindfolded most of the time and never saw his captors' faces. He was not assaulted and saw a doctor after requesting pills, but suffered lacerations during the forced exit from his home, falling several times while barefoot.

Focus

Pope's South Asia trip brings hope to tiny Catholic groups



AP

In this Saturday, Nov. 25, 2017, file photo, ethnic Kachin Christians arrive at St. Anthony Catholic Church in Yangon, Myanmar. Pope Francis on Monday, Nov. 27, 2017 begins a six-day trip to the two countries. While attention will focus on how Francis addresses the Rohingya Muslim crisis, the trip also holds huge significance for the tiny Catholic communities in each country.

By JULHAS ALAM
ASSOCIATED PRESS

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP)— Pope Francis on Monday begins a six-day trip to Myanmar and Bangladesh. While attention will focus on how Francis addresses the Rohingya Muslim crisis, the trip also holds huge significance for the tiny Catholic communities in each country.

Those Catholics face obstacles that include discrimination, an inability to land leadership roles and threats of violence. Many Christians hope the pope's visit will highlight the plight of the poor and of minority religious groups, including their own.

MYANMAR CATHOLICS

There are 660,000 Catholics in Myanmar, just over 1 percent of the population of 53 million. In total, Christians make up just over 6 percent of the population. Catholicism was brought to the country more than 500 years ago, and for generations Catholics have played a vital role in developing far-flung rural areas that authorities have found hard to reach. But when the socialist government took power in 1965, most Catholic-based missionary schools, boarding houses and properties were seized by the military at gunpoint. Catholics were later able to slowly rebuild their missions.

BATTLING DISCRIMINATION

Myanmar Catholic leaders say that as members of one of the smallest religious groups in a country dominated by Buddhism, they face discrimination, even if it isn't typically overt threats or torture.

"There are always challenges to stand up as Catholic and to have strong faith here," said Rev. Mariano Soe Naing, a spokesman for Myanmar's Bishops' Conference.

Christianity is viewed by many as a colonial belief after the country was ruled by the British for a century until its independence in 1948. Likewise, the separation of church and state is considered a foreign imposition.

For the past 18 years, Myanmar has been listed by the U.S. as a "country of particular concern" under the International Religious Freedom Act for having engaged in, or tolerated, severe violations of religious freedom.

But unlike Rohingya Muslims, Christians haven't faced widespread violence and persecution. Christian leaders say they're afforded "peaceful coexistence" and an understanding the government won't interfere.

ROLE IN MYANMAR

The Catholic Church runs about 300 boarding houses across Myanmar, hosting children from villages who can't afford to go to school. It's done without any significant support from the government in a country that remains among the poorest in the world.

But Catholics don't play a broader leadership role in society.

"To be honest, if you are a Christian in this country, you will never get promoted," Rev. Mariano said. "There are no Catholics in the government administration or in any significant leadership positions."

RAISING AWARNENESS

The profile of Catholics was boosted when Archbishop Charles Maung Bo became Myanmar's first Roman Catholic Cardinal in 2015. And they are getting another boost by having a pope visit the country for the first time. Catholic leaders hope the community will benefit in the long run.

"Because of the pope's visit, Catholics will be more visible to many people and they will be aware of the existence of the Catholic community in Myanmar," Mariano said.

BANGLADESH CATHOLICS

There are just 375,000 Catholics in Bangladesh, a tiny fraction of the population of 158 million. In total, Christians account for less than 1 percent of all people in the Muslim majority country. The Portuguese first brought Christianity during the 16th century and missionary efforts began in the early 1800s.

BACKDROP OF VIOLENCE

The pope's visit takes place against a backdrop of religious tensions after radical Muslims attacked or threatened to attack Christian priests and their followers in Bangladesh. Last year before Christmas, many churches said they got phone calls or letters threatening dire consequences because of their attempts to spread Christianity.

A major attack in July 2016 on a restaurant in the diplomatic zone of the capital, Dhaka, left 20 people dead, including 17 foreigners. The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for that attack and several others, although the government claims the group doesn't exist in Bangladesh. Authorities say the domestic group Jumatul Mujahedeen Bangladesh was behind the Dhaka attack.

The government launched a massive crackdown on suspected militants after the Dhaka attack. More than 60 people, including some suspected radical leaders, were killed in raids. Many others were arrested.

CATHOLICS EXCITED

Francis will be the second pope, after Pope John Paul II, to visit Bangladesh since it gained independence from Pakistan following a war in 1971. The Vatican quickly acknowledged Bangladesh as an independent nation after the war, helping set the tone for cordial relations since.

Living in the Hatileite village north of Dhaka are some 1,500 Catholics. They are part of a tribal community in which many embraced the religion after the first tribesman converted in 1927. Villager Louis Suprobhat Jangcham, 50, said he's enthusiastic about the visit.

"I attended a gathering when Pope John Paul came to Dhaka in 1986. It was very exciting," he said. "The people from our village will attend this time too. This is a great moment for me."

MESSAGE OF HOPE

Christian leaders in Bangladesh say they hope the pope's visit will highlight a range of issues from religious solidarity to a warming planet.

Cardinal Patrick D'Rozario, the archbishop of Dhaka, said the visit will be an opportunity to emphasize the causes of the poor who need blessing and comfort.

"This visit is for spiritual causes, for highlighting peace and harmony. But the Holy Father will also touch upon other very important issues that concern Bangladesh," he said. "The Rohingya crisis and climate change will come up prominently."

The pope posted a video message ahead of his visit.

"We are living at a time when religious believers and people of goodwill are called to foster mutual understanding and respect," the pope said. "And to support each other as members of our one human family."

Health & Fitness

Woman using blood glucose monitor.
DREAMSTIME/TNS

QUINN ON NUTRITION

Diabetes news

By BARBARA QUINN
THE MONTEREY COUNTY HERALD/TNS

We got the historic news a little over a year ago … FDA's approval of an artificial pancreas for people with type 1 diabetes. These folks must needle-poke their fingers several times a day to determine if their blood sugar is too high or too low and then give themselves multiple daily shots of insulin to regulate their blood sugar levels.

This new technology combines an easier way to check bloods sugars throughout the day (continuous glucose monitor) with software that automatically delivers the right amount of insulin at the right time through an insulin pump. Very cool.

In spite of our progress, however, we still have a lot to do … and learn. Here are some things to know:

Don't miss the warning signs. An estimated 7 million people have diabetes and don't know it…yet. Symptoms include frequent urination and thirst, extreme fatigue and hunger, blurry vision and cuts that are slow to heal. When detected early, the better chance we have to avoid the scary complications of this disease, says the American Diabetes Association.

Type 2 diabetes can often be prevented…if it's caught before it becomes full-blown diabetes. That's what the National Diabetes Prevention Program (NDPP) is all about. Check out the Preventing Diabetes class offered through Montage Health at "http://www.chomp.org"www.chomp.org.

Researchers from Britain recently studied the diets of more than 1500 adults and performed blood tests that measure the body's risk for inflammation. (Type 2 diabetes is an inflammatory condition.) They found a particular pattern of eating—a high intake of vegetables and fruit with limited sugar, white bread and French fries—was associated with a lower prevalence of type 2 diabetes. Are we surprised?

Know your carbs. Two words describe carbs in our food—sugar and starch. Natural sugars in fruit and milk are carbs. So are sugar-sweetened goodies and beverages. And while carbohydrates provide clean and efficient fuel to our brains and muscles, too many carbs at one time can put pressure on our insulin producing cells. For example, one cup of cooked rice can affect blood sugars as much as 3 slices of bread. Watch those serving sizes.

Say YES! to non-starchy vegetables. From artichokes to zucchini, most vegetables are high in dietary fiber—carbohydrates that don't spike blood sugars. And here's a surprise: beets and carrots are considered non-starchy vegetables, too.

Diets that are good for the heart are good for diabetes. That's because sugary-sweet blood is toxic to arteries and can damage the heart. Besides keeping carbs in check, a diet low in saturated fat helps avoid inflammation associated with diabetes as well as heart disease.

Beans are good for diabetes control. Although considered starchy vegetables, half the carbs in beans are in the form of dietary fiber which does not convert to blood sugar.

Get the right information. Not everything you hear about diabetes is true. Find evidence-based resources at these sites: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive Diseases (niddk.nih.gov), American Diabetes Association (diabetes.org), Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (jdrf.org).

Barbara Quinn is a registered dietitian and certified diabetes educator affiliated with Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula. She is the author of "Quinn-Essential Nutrition" (Westbow Press, 2015). Email her at to barbara@quinnessentialnutrition.com.

Chia seeds are a super nutritious food with many health benefits

By TERESA FARNEY
THE GAZETTE

I first heard about chia seeds at a vegan class taught by Colorado Springs, Colo., cookbook author Alan Roettinger. He extolled the virtues of using the seeds in dressings and noted that when they are soaked in water, they swell up and become gelatinous.

"Chia seeds are a true super food, rich in essential fats, protein, fiber and minerals," he said. "I use chia most often before my workouts, in a simple drink I make by stirring a couple of tablespoons into a glass of water or juice and letting them soak for about 10 minutes. Their hydrophilic (water-loving) quality enables them to absorb 10 times their weight in water, which is then slowly released—along with the fats and protein—as I exercise."

Roettinger said it's better than simply drinking water because it keeps him hydrated longer.

"The fats are an excellent, clean-burning fuel, too," he said. "I also use chia in smoothies, salads, cold soups, and snacks. Blended into fruit purees, they're a terrific thickener for healthful sauces and puddings."

That endorsement got me thinking about these interesting little seeds. I wanted to learn more, so when I saw Christina Summers' "Cha-cha-cha-cha chia chia!" cooking class being offered, I signed up immediately. Summers owns Forks n' Spoons Vegan Cooking Made Simple cooking school in Colorado Springs.

While we waited for our chocolate chia seed pudding to plump up, Summers told us about the health benefits of chia seeds. She noted that they are gluten-free, high in fiber, protein and omega-3 fatty acids, and help regulate blood sugar. I did a little more digging and found that they are cholesterol-free and that one 28-gram serving of these super seeds boasts 4.4 grams of protein, nearly 10 percent of the daily value, and 11 grams of dietary fiber, about a third of the recommended daily intake for adults.

Chia seeds are part of the mint family that is native to Mexico and Guatemala. Their history dates to the Aztecs as an important food crop, but they didn't become known in North America until about 30 years ago. They come in white, dark brown or black. Unlike flaxseeds, which have to be ground in order to benefit from their nutrition, chia seeds can be eaten whole or milled.

It's easy to incorporate chia into your diet. The seeds are tasteless. But remember they will swell up when mixed with liquid and could make your recipes thicker. You'll find them in health food stores and some supermarkets.

When Summers finished telling us about the miraculous chia seeds, our chocolate pudding had doubled in volume, from 2 cups to 4 cups. And it tasted delicious.

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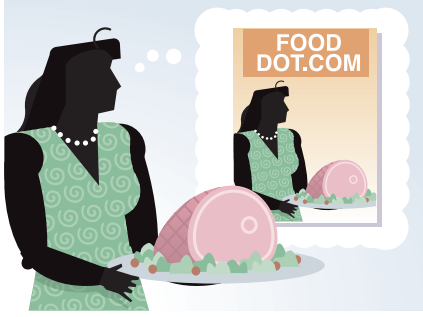
Personal Trainer

Surviving the holidays

Some ways to reduce the stress of the holidays and keep up a healthy, physically active lifestyle:

1. Take time for yourself every day instead of spending too much time with friends and family
2. Don't set unrealistic exercise goals; 30 minutes a day will keep you active even if you are used to spending an hour
3. Don't try to lose weight or keep up a restrictive diet; it's better to enjoy your favorite holiday foods in small portions
4. Ask a friend or family member to exercise with you
5. Create new, active traditions; instead of throwing a cocktail party, go snowshoeing or ice skating

6. Drink plenty of water; travel, alcohol and heated indoor air are dehydrating
7. Pause during meals; for example, eat dinner early and take a walk before dessert
8. Use alcohol and caffeine moderately; try a new herbal tea instead



9. Avoid placing unrealistic, perfectionist demands on yourself
10. Take time to laugh

Source: American Council on Exercise
Graphic: Tribune News Service

Life & Style

A whale's tale: Longest painting in North America restored

NEW BEDFORD, Mass. (AP)—A museum has restored the longest painting in North America so it can share the story of American whaling with the public.

The quarter-mile-long (0.4-kilometer-long) panorama toured the U.S. after it was completed in 1848. A section was featured at the 1964 New York World's Fair.

But the panorama deteriorated after so much traveling on wagons and trains, rolling and unrolling. Paint dried up and flaked off, and the panorama was put into storage.

The New Bedford Whaling Museum enlisted the help of a textile conservator to fix the "Grand Panorama of a Whaling Voyage Round the World." Now it's searching for a large venue to display it, scouting locations in New Bedford but open to considering Providence, Rhode Island, or the Mystic Seaport in Connecticut.

D. Jordan Berson, who's managing the project, said he hopes this record of American whaling can eventually return to some of the cities that were stops on the national tour, including Boston; Buffalo, New York; and St. Louis.

"It's a national treasure that's been out of the spotlight for too long," he said.

Benjamin Russell and Caleb Purrington created the panorama to capture all aspects of a whaling voyage. The panorama would be mounted on a system of cranks and reels to go across a theater stage as a narrator told stories of hunting whales and processing their carcasses. A poster for the Boston stop in 1849 advertises tickets for 25 cents.

The audience members would hear what it was like to round Cape Horn and visit Fiji and other far-flung destinations as they saw painted scenes of those locations. Most people hadn't traveled to any of those places, and photography was in its infancy.

Many young men at that time were headed west in search of gold, which meant they weren't joining whaling crews, said Michael Dyer, the museum's curator of maritime history. The panorama may have been used as a recruiting tool, he said.

In this Tuesday, Nov. 7, 2017 photo textile conservator Kate Tarleton, of Rochester, Mass., stands between two oversized spools holding a portion of the 1848, "Grand Panorama of a Whaling Voyage Round the World," at the museum in New Bedford, Mass. The quarter-mile-long (0.4-kilometer-long) panorama toured the U.S. after it was completed in 1848. AP

Universities revoke journalism awards given to Charlie Rose

PHOENIX (AP)—Charlie Rose, who was fired this week by CBS News and whose program was canceled by PBS in the wake of sexual misconduct allegations from multiple women, had accolades from two universities rescinded Friday.

Panels at both Arizona State University and the University of Kansas met this week and coincidentally came to the same decision on the same day.

Arizona's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication gave Rose an award for journalism excellence in 2015. But the actions reported about Rose were too "egregious" to ignore, according to Dean Christopher Callahan.

"The actions victimized young women much like those who make up the overwhelming majority of Cronkite students—young women who deserve to enter workplaces that reward them for their hard work, intelligence and creativity and where they do not have to fear for their safety or dignity," Callahan said in a statement.

Callahan said the action was mostly symbolic. But he hoped it would send a message that sexual misconduct would not be tolerated. The award has never been revoked since it was created in 1984. Past recipients include Bob Woodward, Diane Sawyer and Christiane Amanpour.

The William Allen White Foundation, which supports journalism education at the University of Kansas, presented Rose an award last spring. The National Citation award has been bestowed on a journalist annually since 1950. Other recipients include Bob Woodward and Gwen Ifill.

After the allegations against Rose surfaced, the foundation's board of trustees voted to revoke the honor. In a news release, officials said Rose "does not exemplify the ideals of this award."

Man banned from Nobel Literature banquet amid sex claims

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP)—The director of a Stockholm cultural center has been banned by the Swedish Academy, which awards the Nobel Literature Prize, from attending a Nobel banquet after several women made sexual misconduct allegations against the man.

Earlier this week, Swedish daily Dagens Nyheter published allegations from 18 women claiming to have been assaulted or raped by the man, who has not been named. He has denied wrongdoing to the paper.

The alleged assaults occurred between 1996 to 2017, according to the newspaper, one of Sweden's largest.

The allegations prompted the Academy to strike the man's name from the guest list for the Dec. 10 Nobel Prize banquet, which follows the award ceremony earlier the same day.

British novelist Kazuo Ishiguro got this year's literature prize.

The center where the man works has been financially supported by the Swedish Academy, and Academy members often attend events at the center including literary readings, academic lectures, dance and music.

In a statement issued late Thursday, the Academy said its annual funding of 126,000 kronor ($15,150) to the center had been stopped immediately. The money had been paid to the institution since 2010 and the Academy stressed it had not been paid to him personally.

The institution said it would also look into its earlier ties with the man, including whether "he has had any influence—direct or indirect—on the Academy's awarding of prizes, scholarships and other kinds of funding, as well as investigate whether or not he has influenced the Academy's work in general."

Q&A: Diplo on historic concert in Cuba, Rihanna and Bieber

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Globe-trotting EDM star Diplo recently checked another locale off his performance wish-list: Cuba.

In March 2016, the Grammy-winning producer-DJ and his trio Major Lazer became one of the first American acts to take advantage of easing travel restrictions by staging a free concert in Havana.

"I'm always looking at like where is music happening? How can I be a part of it? How can I help it? How can I introduce something to it? And it's easy for anybody to do that, you know, you just have to have a little bit of adventure," said Diplo, who has also performed in Nigeria, Nepal and Pakistan.

Diplo

But pulling off the historic show in front of the United States Embassy was no easy task.

"The Cuban side took a lot of wrangling," explained the hitmaker behind "Lean On" and "Where Are U Now" with Skrillex and Justin Bieber. "My team, my management, the producers of the event, they spent about 16 to 18 months planning it, procuring the event space, making it all right with both sides of the government."

The extraordinary performance, along with Cuba's youth culture and music scene, is documented in the film "Give Me Future." It premiered on Apple Music last week.

Earlier this month the Trump administration imposed travel and commerce restrictions on Cuba that will make it harder for Americans to visit the island nation. The stricter rules mark a return to the tougher U.S. stance toward Cuba that existed before former President Barack Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro restored diplomatic relations in 2015.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Diplo talks about traveling around the world and his hopes to perform in Cuba again.

AP: Does the change in travel sanctions make it even more special that you got in when you could?

Diplo: In fact we tried to go and set up another kind of event next month, but we were in the process of pulling the trigger on that, and then the reversal of a lot of those rules came down in the last 10 days. So yeah, it's not cool, but you know, it changes back-and-forth almost every presidency so we'll see if it switches up again.

AP: Was Cuba one of the hardest gigs to pull off?

Diplo: Production-wise ... we're talking about four barricades for almost half a million people. And these barricades were just dragged out of some storage and painted white the day of the show. So I couldn't believe it was all handled and put together and everybody was safe and the concert went with no problems.

I traveled from Pakistan a few days before the show in Cuba. We had been to Bangladesh last year. We did a whole tour in Africa. So we did shows everywhere from Nigeria to Uganda. But this was definitely the biggest and the craziest situation.

I did a show in Mongolia about two, three years ago and that was one of the wildest places to play. ...No one knew who I was when I did the show. They just kind of were confused and all showed up.

AP: What's left on your travel bucket list?

Diplo: We had a show in North Korea that was booked. And it's funny, the actual club in North Korea, it's called The Diplo. So it would've been a really cool show to do but that got pulled. That situation has sort of been deteriorating over the last two years.

I actually wanted to go to Papua New Guinea earlier last year ... but we couldn't find any place safe even to stay so we skipped that show. I'm ready. If anyone's in Papua New Guinea, hit me on my pager or contact my management and I'll come.

AP: Any plans to work with Rihanna? Did she really compare your song to airport reggae?

Diplo: I thought it was a really funny story ... She's such a good person. She's a good sport and I know her personally. ...Every time she's working or writing an album I'm always kind of involved, sending records and demos and, you know, sometimes they like something and sometimes they don't. But you never know. For me, I'm just happy making my own records too. ...I'm not always looking to have a big pop star on my records. You don't need them either, to be honest.

We're working on a couple ideas actually with (Rihanna's) team right now so we'll see. But you never want to say you're going to get anything because it's always going to be a sad story at the end of the day.

AP: How about a Bieber reunion?

Diplo: I would love to. Sometimes we trade text messages. They're always pretty weird. I don't know. He's a fascinating kid and to be honest, he's so good at everything he does—whether it's playing sports or playing guitar. I mean, he can make anything great. I love the guy. ...For me, he's just kind of a cultural icon so anytime I get a chance to do something like that—even with Madonna or working with Beyonce—anytime I get the opportunity, I'd love to try something. But it doesn't always work out. I'm just happy to make music in general with anybody.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Arkansas man admits stealing Geena Davis' laptop

BENTONVILLE, Ark. (AP)—An Arkansas man has pleaded guilty to stealing a laptop from actress Geena Davis. Investigators say 67-year-old Gerardo Mancia-Hernandez took the computer on a luggage cart after Davis arrived at Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport on May 1. Investigators say the actress placed her computer on the cart when she stopped to take a picture next to a poster for Arkansas' Bentonville Film Festival, which she co-founded in 2015. Airport security footage shows a man placing his baggage on the same luggage cart and leaving the terminal. Davis' assistant notified airport police after Davis realized she didn't have the $2,200 laptop. The Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette reports that Mancia-Hernandez pleaded guilty last week to theft of property lost, mislaid or delivered by mistake. He was given a three-year suspended sentence and must complete 30 hours of community service.

Trump supporters confuse LeVar Burton with LaVar Ball online

LOS ANGELES (AP)—President Donald Trump is feuding with LaVar Ball and LeVar Burton is taking the hit on Twitter. Burton is an actor best known for playing Lt. La Forge in "Star Trek" on TV and film and for championing kids' education through the "Reading Rainbow" series. Ball is the father of Los Angeles Lakers rookie Lonzo Ball and UCLA basketball player LiAngelo Ball, one of three student players recently arrested in China for shoplifting. Trump tweeted that Ball was an "ungrateful fool" for not being more appreciative of presidential intervention in LiAngelo Ball's case. Some of the president's followers in turn attacked Burton on Twitter, with one calling him a "has been actor with a thief for a son." Burton and Ball haven't let the controversy interrupt their holiday plans—both tweeted Thanksgiving wishes to their followers Thursday.

UK bookmaker suspends bets on when Prince Harry will marry

LONDON (AP)—A major London bookmaker has suspended betting on whether Prince Harry will marry American actress Meghan Markle in 2018 amid rumors an engagement may be announced soon.

Jessica Bridge of Ladbrokes said Friday that it seems an engagement announcement "is to be confirmed imminently."

The bookmaker has stopped taking bets on a 2018 royal wedding after Markle was seen shopping in London this week.

The British press has reported that Markle has already met in private with Harry's grandmother, Queen Elizabeth II.

The couple has been dating for more than a year and Harry has asked the press to grant them a certain amount of privacy.

Markle is believed to be in the process of moving to London.

Palace officials say they will not comment on the rumors.

Uma Thurman lashes out at Harvey Weinstein in cryptic post

Thurman

NEW YORK (AP)—Uma Thurman has wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving—everyone except disgraced movie mogul Harvey Weinstein.

In a cryptic Instagram post Thursday , the actress wishes her followers a happy Thanksgiving but adds, "except you Harvey, and all your wicked conspirators." She says she's "glad it's going slowly—you don't deserve a bullet."

Dozens of actresses have alleged Weinstein sexually harassed or assaulted them, including Rose McGowan and Asia Argento. But Thurman has said she's waiting to speak when she's less angry.

She plays an assassin in the Weinstein-produced "Kill Bill." She also starred in "Pulp Fiction," another of his films.

Philadelphia halts sale of Love Park keepsakes

AP
In this March 27, 2015, file photo, a young man climbs on a sculpture by Robert Indiana, at JFK Plaza, commonly known as Love Park, in Philadelphia.

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Philadelphia officials hoping to sell engraved blocks from the original Love Park on Friday were surprised to learn about an hour before the granite keepsakes went up for grabs that they didn't have the right to sell them.

A spokeswoman for the city's parks department said officials "incorrectly assumed" that they had permission to sell the small souvenirs, which are marked with the iconic lettering of artist Robert Indiana's LOVE sculpture.

She said she couldn't immediately pin down where the bottleneck occurred but she remained optimistic that the city would clear up the matter as soon as possible, especially since the LOVE lettering is ubiquitous in Philadelphia.

"We're very hopeful we will get permission," said spokeswoman Jennifer Crandall.

The city aimed to sell 250 of the mementos at a Christmas market for $50 each. A long line had formed, but shoppers' names instead were added to a reservation list.

Love Park was an internationally known destination for skateboarders. It is currently undergoing a major makeover. A large amount of granite was saved for use in other skate parks, and the city says keepsake sales will in part benefit their upkeep.

Ivanka Trump: Malia Obama should be 'off limits' to media

NEW YORK (AP)—Ivanka Trump is condemning recent tabloid coverage of President Barack Obama's eldest daughter Malia, saying the college student deserves privacy and ought to be "OFF limits."

The president's daughter tweets: "Malia Obama should be allowed the same privacy as her school aged peers. She is a young adult and private citizen, and should be OFF limits."

The former first daughter is a first-year student at Harvard University. Malia Obama took a gap year after graduating high school in 2016, in what the Obamas said was an effort to start college without the distraction of her father in the White House.

The informal society of presidential children has historically been protective of its youngest members, without regard for political party.

Well-paid son is slow to pay debts he owes his parents

DEAR ABBY: My 25-year-old son, "Jay," would like to come home for Christmas. I'm paying, so I made his reservation yesterday. Late last night, he told my husband he needs to go back two days early because of work. This change will cost around $150 more than the $215 I'm already paying.

Although my son earns a six-figure salary, he is unable to pay his student/parent loan on time each month. When he's late, I get harassing emails and phone calls. The loan is in my name because Jay blew all the $60,000 he got from a settlement, and he begged me to do this for him so he could graduate.

My husband and I are retired, but we both work part-time. Jay AND his sister are reluctant to pay for their tickets when they want to see us. They each live an hour plane ride away. They always seem to have enough money to travel and do what they want to do. I am so upset, I'd like to cancel the holidays because I feel we are being taken advantage of. What do you think?

NAUGHTY, NOT NICE

DEAR N.N.N.: I think that rather than cancel the holidays, you and your husband should use the visit to inform your 25-year-old son that it's time to grow up and pay his bills. Because he now has a six-figure income—thanks to your generosity—he should assume responsibility for his student loan debt and pay it on time. And if he doesn't, consider reviewing your estate plan and subtracting what he owes you.

DEAR ABBY: I'm 37. When I was 32, after having been together for 15 years and married for seven, my wife died suddenly. I grieved, but have finally been able to start thinking about my future.

I recently started dating—well, one date, to be exact—and when I mentioned that I was a widower, I immediately saw her interest turn to pure sympathy. I tried to elaborate on it, stating that it had been some time ago and that I'm ready to start the next phase of my life. (I want a family.)

Friends have advised me, "Do NOT tell women you're a widower until you have been dating for some time," but I find it nearly impossible to talk about my past without mentioning my late wife. She was a major part of my life for almost half of it—and for all of my adult life, including the last five years she hasn't been here. Is it possible to tell someone that you are a widower and not let her sympathy overwhelm any other emotion?

YOUNG-ISH WIDOWER IN COLORADO

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR WIDOWER: An expression of sympathy is the appropriate reaction when you tell someone a loved one died. What you must avoid is allowing your late wife to be the MAIN topic of conversation, and make an effort to talk about your date's interests, mutual interests and plans for the future.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

I'M GOING TO BE THE NEXT HOUDINI! TIE ME TO THIS CHAIR AND I'LL ESCAPE!
TIE THE KNOTS TIGHTER. DON'T MAKE IT SO EASY FOR ME. TIE MY FEET, TOO.
11-27
ALL RIGHT, LET'S SEE YOU GET OUT OF THAT.
HA! THE GREAT CALVIN! CAN ESCAPE FROM ANYTHING!
CALVIN, DINNER TIME!
SHOULD I TELL HER YOU'RE TIED UP AT THE MOMENT, HA HA?
I'LL BE (MMF) OUT OF HERE (RRG) IN NO TIME. GOSH, I CAN'T EVEN MOVE.

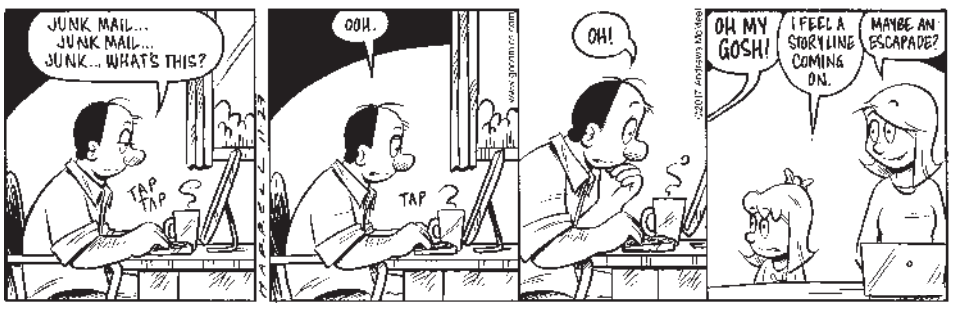
Garfield®

By Jim Davis

THERE'S AN OLD ARBUCKLE FAMILY SAYING THAT GOES LIKE THIS...
"WHEN THE ANTLERS ARE UPON THE BEAR, CHRISTMAS IS NIGH"
CHRISTMAS IS NIGH!
JIM DAVIS 11-27

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

WHAT'LL YOU HAVE?
GIMME A BEER, SAL.
HERE - YOU'VE CHEATED ON YOUR TAXES, YOU LIED TO YOUR BOSS AND YOU HAVEN'T CALLED YOUR MOTHER IN DAYS.
I DON'T LIKE THE NEW SIN TAX.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

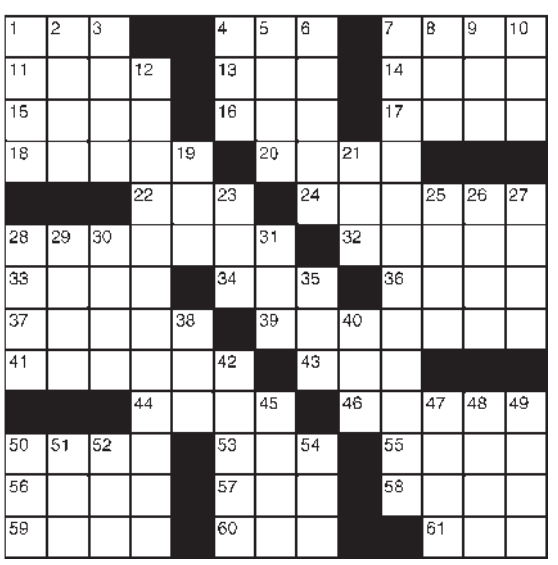
ACROSS
1 — Aviv
4 Opening
7 Coffee, slangily
11 April forecast
13 "Exodus" hero
14 "Once — a time ..."
15 Vicinity
16 Upper limit
17 Monthly payment
18 Dwarf planet
20 Alpha follower
22 Savings plan acronym
24 Collie of film
28 Lasagna cheese
32 Grammarian's concern
33 Genesis garden
34 911 responder
36 Pedestal occupant
37 Postpone
39 Wizard's study
41 Yellowish
43 Chatter
44 Knitting stitch
46 Blunder
50 Mideast strip
53 Fine, at NASA
55 Bar
56 Always
57 "Ulalume" writer
58 Smooch
59 Timid
60 Blue hue
61 Hwy.

DOWN
1 Snare
2 Count counterpart
3 Stead
4 Leg, in slang
5 Speedy steed
6 Dot on a computer screen
7 1993 dinosaur film
8 Mimic
9 Otto — Bismarck
10 Busy insect
12 Yellowstone, for one
19 Scrap
21 Greek cross
23 Packed away
25 Marquis de —
26 "Young Frankenstein" role
27 Slithery
28 Some wines
29 Concept
30 Honeycomb compartment
31 Mornings (Abbr.)
35 Stocking stuffer
38 Second person
40 Joplin tune
42 Under — (hidden)
45 Take a gander
47 Equitable
48 Pugilist's weapon
49 Otherwise
50 Tiara sparkler
51 "Hail, Caesar!"
52 Wye follower
54 Crucial

Solution time: 26 mins.

P	A	W	N	S		I	S	D		M	A	I
A	G	R	E	E		I	¯	O		I	D	A
W	E	I	R	D		B	E	N	T	L	E	Y
		G	O	A	T	I	¯		H	A	L	E
C	E	L		N	E	D		M	I	N	E	R
O	R	E	M		N	O	W	O	R			
D	R	Y	I	C	E		O	N	S	P	E	C
			S	A	T	Y	R		T	A	R	O
R	U	S	T	Y		U	S	S		R	A	W
A	N	N	E		S	M	E	A	R	S		
S	H	I	R	L	E	Y		M	O	L	E	S
T	I	P		¯	R	U		B	O	E	R	S
A	P	E		D	A	M		A	S	Y	E	T

Last Friday's Answer 11-27



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Alison Pill, 32; Jaleel White, 41; Fisher Stevens, 54; Kathryn Bigelow, 66.

Happy Birthday: Positive change will unfold if you are willing to share your feelings and let others know what you want. Incorporate more discipline into whatever you decide to do and be willing to live up to your promises. Your reputation will depend on honesty, integrity and reliability. Take your responsibilities seriously and the changes that take place this year will be exceptional. Your numbers are 5, 11, 23, 25, 33, 39, 43.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Look inward and discover how much you have grown this year. Express who you have become through the image you present to the world around you. A responsible attitude and an energetic approach to learning are encouraged. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Be creative when dealing with other people. You can spark greater interest in what you plan to do if you approach your target in a unique fashion. A romantic gesture will win someone's favor. A business meeting will offer new possibilities. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Proceed with caution. You'll be set up by someone using emotional tactics to get his or her way. Listen carefully and use discretion if temptation provokes you to get involved in something risky. Be smart and avoid loss. ✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Take a unique path. Share your ideas with a partner or someone you want to collaborate with. Much can be accomplished if you are open about the way you feel and what you want to see happen. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* The people you are close to may not understand the current influences in your life. Be more open and receptive with anyone who will be affected by the choices you make. Explain your actions intelligently and you will gain approval. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Do your best to get along with others. Partnerships will suffer if you aren't up-front about the way you feel. Positive changes can only take place if you are willing to discuss problems and ways to solve them. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Confusion will set in if you rely on others for your information. Be resourceful and do your own research. Matters pertaining to earning a living and getting along with your peers should be handled creatively. A domestic change should be monitored carefully. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Share your thoughts and ideas with someone creative. A chance to do something different will be a learning experience. Children and loved ones will encourage you to do your own thing. Follow your heart and let your intuition guide you. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Communication will be difficult when dealing with peers, a close friend or sibling. It's important to clarify your intentions in order to avoid a misunderstanding. An educational pursuit or business trip will pay off. Don't count on favors. ✪✪

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Stay focused on getting ahead. Use your intuition to come up with solutions and ideas that will separate you from any competition you encounter. An unusual opportunity will sprout from a conversation you have with someone you used to work with. 4 stars

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Live and learn. Let experience guide you into the future and help you make wise choices. Choose a healthy lifestyle and aim to set a high standard that will push you to the top. Discipline coupled with intelligence will equal success. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* You'll know instinctively what to do. Refuse to let anyone interfere in what you know is best for you. Opportunity is apparent if you take advantage of what's available. Personal improvements and romance are highlighted. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are colorful, unique and sensitive. You are assertive and energetic.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

7		1			4			5
	4			5			6	
		6	3		8	2		4
5		9		4		6		
	3						5	
		7		6		9		8
1		5	9		7	4		
	7			8			9	
8			4			3		6

Difficulty Level ★ 11/27

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

1	5	8	2	7	6	9	4	3
6	7	4	9	5	3	2	1	8
2	3	9	8	1	4	5	7	6
3	8	2	7	6	9	1	5	4
9	1	6	3	4	5	7	8	2
5	4	7	1	2	8	3	6	9
7	6	5	4	9	2	8	3	1
8	2	1	6	3	7	4	9	5
4	9	3	5	8	1	6	2	7

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 11/20

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

MCDONALD'S SECRET SAUCES Solution: 4 letters

H	F	H	S	A	D	E	C	I	D	E	C	I	L	S
F	A	E	S	E	L	K	C	I	P	D	D	Y	Y	O
O	L	M	E	O	I	H	S	I	L	E	R	U	T	R
O	D	A	B	B	N	R	R	U	O	P	A	M	T	B
D	S	E	V	U	R	I	O	S	A	P	T	V	A	A
N	N	O	L	O	R	A	O	L	T	O	S	I	P	T
A	A	P	Y	I	R	G	N	N	A	H	U	N	A	E
R	C	O	S	B	C	L	E	E	C	C	M	E	P	R
G	I	W	U	O	E	I	C	R	K	I	L	G	R	U
R	R	D	G	M	D	A	O	O	N	C	L	A	I	T
E	E	E	A	E	L	I	N	U	L	A	I	R	K	A
B	M	R	R	C	E	C	U	A	S	O	G	H	A	N
E	A	G	I	S	E	S	A	M	E	N	R	O	C	G
C	N	U	T	C	H	E	E	S	Y	M	B	O	L	I
I	M	A	Y	O	N	N	A	I	S	E	C	I	P	S

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American, Beef, Bran, Calcium, Calories, Caramel, Cheesy, Chicken, Chopped, Color, Corn, Dash, Delicious, Diced, Flavor, Food, Garlic, Grand, Hamburger, Iceberg, Ingredient, Mayonnaise, Mustard, Onion, Paprika, Patty, Pickles, Pour, Powder, Relish, Sauce, Sesame, Signature, Sliced, Slogan, Sodium, Sorbate, Soybean, Spice, Sugar, Symbol, Vinegar, Yum

Last Friday's Answer: Moth

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By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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Judge Kim-Tenori allowe
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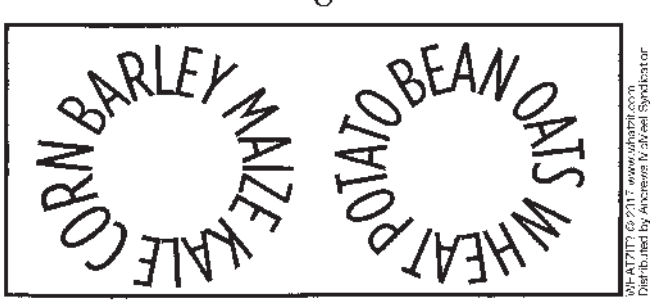

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Find today's solution in classified section

Messi agrees to contract extension with Barca

AP

Barcelona's Lionel Messi, left, controls the ball next to Leganes' Dimitrios Siovas during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Barcelona and Leganes at the Butarque stadium in Madrid, Saturday, Nov 18, 2017.

BARCELONA (AP)—Lionel Messi hopes to end his career at Barcelona after ending months of speculation on Saturday by signing a contract extension to 2021, sealing an agreement reached in July, the club announced.

Barca had said in the summer that Messi, 30, had committed his future to the club but the Argentine had not signed the new deal.

With his previous contract set to expire in 2018, Messi could have left Barca for free next summer had he not extended his deal.

"We have needed to do the signature for some time. It is done and I am happy to remain tied to the club," Messi told Barca TV.

"I have always said I wanted to end my career here, it is my dream to finish at Barcelona and we are on the right track."

Barcelona president Josep Maria Bartomeu said the club needed to change the deal agreed in June to increase Messi's buyout clause to 700 million euros ($835 million) and prevent the danger of a repeat of Neymar's departure when Paris Saint-Germain payed the Brazilian's 222 million-euro buyout clause in August.

"We agreed to sign a new deal with a buyout clause adjusted to the current transfer market," said Bartomeu.

"The buyout clause is 700 million. It allows us to keep Leo Messi where he should be."

Without Neymar, Messi's role as a creator and goalscorer has increased in a Barca side that has unusually built its stunning start to the season on a defensive record of 13 clean sheets in 18 games.

"The departure of Ney has meant a change in the way we play," Messi, who has 16 goals in 19 games this campaign, told Spanish sports daily Marca on Saturday, a day after picking up his fourth Golden Shoe as the top goalscorer in Europe last season.

"We lost a huge amount of attacking potential, but that has benefited us in a defensive sense. Now we are more solid in midfield, we have more structure and that has made us stronger defensively."

Barca first announced an agreement with Messi back on July 5, but pressure has been mounting on Bartomeu to get Messi to put pen to paper after a turbulent summer for the Catalans.

Neymar's departure sparked a crisis and Bartomeu was heavily criticised for failing to ward off PSG with a higher buyout clause and for a haphazard search for replacements in the final weeks of the transfer window.

Bartomeu did see off a vote of no confidence launched by disgruntled fans thanks to Barca's fantastic start to the season, in large part because of Messi's form.

Bartomeu now has the image he craved of a smiling Messi tying the remainder of his peak years to the club.

"The new contract once more proves the relationship between Barca and Leo Messi, the best player in the history of football," added Bartomeu.

"He has always said he is happy at Barca and we are beginning a new era with a new project under Ernesto Valverde that at the moment is going phenomenally well."

Barca coach Valverde is also hopeful the stability of Messi's new deal will aid his side's season.

"It's very positive to calm the atmosphere surrounding the club," said Valverde.

"It is a sign of commitment to the club and the team. To be at the same club for 21 years is something very few people can manage."

Messi's 30 trophies are, along with teammate Andres Iniesta, the most of any player in Barca's history. They total eight La Liga and four Champions League titles each.

The diminutive Argentina captain, who joined Barca at the age of 13, has also smashed 523 goals in 602 games to become the Catalans' all-time top goalscorer.

News of Messi's renewal comes as a huge boost to the leaders of La Liga ahead of Sunday's top-of-the-table clash at Valencia.

Barca lead a revitalised Valencia by four points thanks to a club record start of 11 wins and one draw from 12 games, with Real Madrid seven points behind after scraping past Malaga 3-2 on Saturday and Atletico Madrid 10 points adrift.

Despite leaving Messi on the bench, Barca also sealed their place in the last 16 of the Champions League with a 0-0 draw at Juventus on Wednesday.

Ohtani agent asks MLB teams for written answers

NEW YORK (AP)—Major league teams were given homework this weekend by Shohei Ohtani.

The agent for the star pitcher and outfielder asked for written explanations in English and Japanese on how Ohtani would fit into each organization intending to bid and what makes the team attractive, according to details obtained by The Associated Press.

The memo from Nez Balelo, co-head of CAA Baseball, was distributed to all 30 teams by the commissioner's office late Friday along with materials for the Dec. 1 vote on a new posting agreement between Major League Baseball and Nippon Professional Baseball. If the deal is approved, the 23-year-old is expected to be put up for bid later that day or the following day.

Balelo's memo asks for a team to evaluate Ohtani's talent as a pitcher and as a hitter; to explain its player development, medical training and player performance philosophies and facilities; to describe its minor league and spring training facilities; to detail resources for Ohtani's cultural assimilation into the team's city; to demonstrate a vision for how Ohtani could integrate into the team's organization; and to tell Ohtani why the team is a desirable place to play.

Each team was asked to provide its answers in both languages as soon as possible. Clubs were told not to include any financial terms of a possible contract.

The Nippon Ham Fighters of Japan's Pacific League are expected to set the posting price at the $20 million maximum, and any big league team meeting that price would have 21 days to negotiate a deal. The money is paid only if a contract is agreed to.

Because of restrictions in MLB's new labor contract, any agreement must be for a minor league contract subject to remaining amounts in each team's 2017-18 international signing bonus pool. Texas has the most available at $3,535,000, followed by the New York Yankees ($3.5 million), Minnesota ($3.07 million) and Pittsburgh ($2,266,750).

Other teams viewed as possibilities include Seattle ($1,557,500) and the Los Angeles Dodgers ($300,000).

Ohtani was the 2016 Pacific League MVP and was 3-2 with a 3.20 ERA this year, limited because of a thigh injury and a hurt ankle that required surgery Oct. 12. He hit .332 in 65 games with 16 doubles, eight homers and 31 RBI.

He has a 42-15 record with a 2.52 ERA and 624 strikeouts in 543 innings over five seasons, and a .286 batting average with 48 homers and 166 RBI.

Under MLB's labor contract, he would not be eligible for a major league contract until he is 25—after the 2019 season.

1st-round withdrawals at Grand Slams could lose prize money

LONDON (AP)—A player who withdraws or performs below professional standards during a first-round singles match at a Grand Slam tournament could be fined under new rules introduced.

The Grand Slam Board says a player who is unfit to compete and withdraws before the draw will receive 50 percent of the first-round prize money. The replacement will receive the remaining 50 percent.

It is an attempt to stop players who aren't fully fit from playing in the first round just so they can collect prize money.

The majors will also revert to 16 seeded players in 2019 from the current 32.

Players will have an additional five seconds between points at next year's Australian Open but time-wasters will have nowhere to hide thanks to the introduction of shot-clocks.

The GSB, responsible for the rules at the four majors, confirmed that the Australian Open's request to raise the time from 20 to 25 seconds and strictly enforce it with an electronic shot-clock had been accepted.

The three other slams will also allow 25 seconds, bringing them into line with regular Tour events, but are not currently scheduled to have shot-clocks.

A two-day rules meeting of the Grand Slam Board in London also agreed to limit pre-match warm-ups to five minutes.

The length of time between points has been a cause of consternation in the sport and while increasing the period allowed appears counterintuitive, shot-clocks will take the decision over whether to penalize a slow player out of the umpire's hands.

Currently it is down to the discretion of the official but the inconsistency in enforcing it has caused problems.

The 25-second shot-clock was used in the U.S. Open qualifying event this year and also at the Next Gen ATP Finals in Milan earlier this month.

The Grand Slam Board said in a statement that the serving-time changes had been agreed unanimously.

Speeding up the game and cutting out "dead time" has been a priority for the men's ATP Tour.

ATP chief executive Chris Kermode, who praised the shot-clock innovation in Milan, believes the five-minute pre-match warmup is still too long

Spurs crush Hornets behind Aldridge, Gasol

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—Pau Gasol and LaMarcus Aldridge each had 17 points and seven rebounds, and the San Antonio Spurs held the Charlotte Hornets to 37 percent shooting in a 106-86 victory on Saturday night.

Rudy Gay added 15 points for the Spurs, who snapped Charlotte's three-game home win streak.

The Hornets entered the game 7-2 at the Spectrum Center, but shot just 22 percent from the field in the first half, fell behind by 11 at halftime and could never make a serious run at the Spurs.

Kemba Walker, who left the game briefly in the third quarter with a left shoulder injury, returned to finish with 18 points on 8-of-12 shooting. He didn't get much help as Charlotte's four other starters—Nic Batum, Dwight Howard, Michael Kidd-Gilchrist and Marvin Williams—combined for 6 of 29 from the field.

AP

San Antonio Spurs' Patty Mills, center, is trapped by Charlotte Hornets' Dwight Howard, left, and Michael Kidd-Gilchrist, right, during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Charlotte, N.C., Saturday, Nov. 25, 2017.

Celtics 108, Pacers 98

In Indianapolis, Kyrie Irving scored 25 points and Al Horford added 21 to lead Boston over Indiana.

Boston (18-3) outscored Indiana 37-16 in the third quarter to turn a nine-point deficit into an 82-70 lead entering the final quarter. Horford had 12 points during a period that saw Indiana record two three-minute scoring droughts.

The Pacers (11-9) were led by Myles Turner, who had 19 points but spent much of the night in foul trouble. Lance Stephenson had 16 points and eight rebounds, and Damontas Sabonis had 17 points and eight boards.

Victor Oladipo, leading Indiana with 22.9 points per game, did not play for the first time this season. He sat with a bruised right knee sustained in Friday's 107-104 win over Toronto.

Warriors 110, Pelicans 95

In Oakland, Stephen Curry bounced back after an 0-for-10 start and scored 14 of his 27 points in the third quarter, Klay Thompson added 24 points and Golden State held on to beat New Orleans.

Draymond Green had six points, seven rebounds and eight assists for the Warriors. Andre Iguodala added 14 points.

Golden State won its second in two nights without NBA Finals MVP Kevin Durant. Durant sat out for the third time in four games with a sprained left ankle.

Anthony Davis had 30 points and 15 rebounds for New Orleans, which had won three straight. Jrue Holiday added 24 points, including 17 in the first quarter. DeMarcus Cousins scored 15 points with seven rebounds.

Mavericks 97, Thunder 81

In Dallas, Dirk Nowitzki scored a season-high 19 points, rookie Dennis Smith held his own against Russell Westbrook on the rookie guard's 20th birthday and Dallas beat Oklahoma City.

A night after blowing a 15-point lead in the second half of a one-point loss to Detroit that followed a dominant win over Kevin Durant and Golden State, the Thunder fell behind for good in the first quarter of the best performance of the season from the suddenly surging Mavericks.

Smith finished with 15 points and four assists while Westbrook had 28 points, 12 rebounds and nine assists.

Carmelo Anthony finished with 16 points, while Paul George scored just two points on 1-of-12 shooting but had a game-high 10 assists for the Thunder.

76ers 130, Magic 111

In Philadelphia, J.J. Redick hit eight 3-pointers and scored 29 points, and Philadelphia cruised without the injured Ben Simmons past skidding Orlando.

Joel Embiid shook off a cold to score 18 points and grab 14 rebounds and T.J. McConnell had 15 points and 13 assists filling in at point guard for Simmons, who missed his first game of the season with swelling in his left elbow.

Redick hit six first-half 3s, four coming in the final 3:10 of the second quarter, as the Sixers built a 70-55 halftime lead.

Elfrid Payton had 22 points, eight rebounds and nine assists in another miserable defensive performance for the Magic, who have lost eight straight.

Trail Blazers 108, Wizards 105

In Washington, C.J. McCollum scored 26 points, including seven straight during a 10-0 game-closing run, and Portland overcame a 17-point fourth-quarter deficit to defeat short-handed Washington.

Damian Lillard scored 29 points for Portland, which won for a second consecutive night on the East Coast in dramatic fashion after a 127-125 victory at Brooklyn on Friday.

Jusuf Nurkic had 17 points and Noah Vonleh grabbed 10 rebounds for the Blazers.

Bradley Beal scored 26 points and Otto Porter added 24 points and 10 rebounds for Washington in the first game of what the team expects to be a two-week stretch without All-Star point guard John Wall.

Rockets 117, Knicks 102

In Houston, James Harden had 37 points and 10 assists as Houston rallied from an early deficit to beat New York.

The Rockets erased New York's early 22-point lead by making 18 3-pointers and getting 44 points from their bench, led by 17 from Ryan Anderson.

New York starters Kristaps Porzingis and Enes Kanter sat out the game because of back ailments, and Michael Beasley and Kyle O'Quinn started. Beasley had a season-high 30 points, while O'Quinn had his first double-double of the season with 20 points and 15 rebounds.

Raptors 112, Hawks 78

In Atlanta, Norman Powell scored 17 points, Jonas Valanciunas added 16 and Toronto blew out Atlanta.

Toronto dominated the game so completely that it needed just 28 minutes from DeMar DeRozan, one of the NBA's most prolific scorers. DeRozan handed out a game-high eight assists and finished with just two points on 1-for-5 shooting before sitting out the fourth quarter.

Kyle Lowry had 15 points and a career-high 13 rebounds as the Raptors snapped a two-game skid. Seven players finished in double figures for the Raptors.

Dennis Schroder scored 14 points and Taurean Prince and Marco Belinelli each had 10 for the Hawks. Atlanta was coming off Friday's rally to beat New York, but it had nothing left after leading by one point late in the first quarter.

Jazz 121, Bucks 108

In Salt Lake City, rookie Donovan Mitchell scored 24 points and Utah made a season-high 18 3-pointers in a victory over Milwaukee.

Mitchell had 10 points in the fourth quarter as the Jazz broke open the game open and finished with a season-best 56.8 percent shooting from the field.

Rodney Hood scored 21 and Derrick Favors added 16 for the Jazz, who have defeated the Bucks seven times in a row.

Giannis Antetokoumnpo had 27 points and 13 rebounds after missing the last game with a sore knee, but showed frustration several times during the contest as the Bucks played from behind most of the game.

Clippers 97, Kings 95

In Sacramento, Blake Griffin made a 10-foot jumper with 3.2 seconds remaining and had a season-high 33 points to lead the Clippers over Sacramento.

The Clippers squandered a 10-point, fourth-quarter lead, but Griffin sent them home from their five-game road trip with a pair of victories.

Lou Williams made four 3-pointers and had 18 points for the Clippers, who have beat the Kings 10 straight times in Sacramento. Austin Rivers added 14 points and DeAndre Jordan had 16 rebounds.

Buddy Hield had career highs of seven 3-pointers and 35 points for the Kings. Hield missed a wild, running left-handed shot at the buzzer.

Rose leaves Cavaliers to handle 'personal matter'

CLEVELAND (AP)—Derrick Rose's injuries may have pushed him to a breaking point.

The former league MVP, who has been trying to revive his career with the Cavaliers, left the team earlier this week to handle a personal matter. A team spokesman said Friday that Rose has been excused since Wednesday and there is no timetable for his return.

The team did not offer any other details about Rose's absence.

ESPN reported that Rose is taking personal time "to evaluate his future in the NBA." A team source told ESPN that Rose's numerous injuries are "taking a toll on him mentally."

Rose's agent, B.J. Armstrong, did not immediately return messages from the AP seeking comment.

Cavs coach Tyronn Lue expects Rose to return to the team.

"We want him to take his time. Just know the team, the coaches, the organization, we all have his back and wish him well," Lue said before the Cavs beat the Charlotte Hornets for their seventh straight win. "We expect to have him back. I reached out to him and texted him and told him that we support him. We know he's going through a tough time right now."

LeBron James hasn't talked to Rose but wants what's best for the nine-year veteran.

"At the end of the day you can't substitute nothing for happiness," James said. "With the injuries that he's gone through his whole career, we hope this ain't the end but if it is, I was happy I got an opportunity to spend a couple of months with him and watch him be the great point guard that he once was. No matter if he comes back, no matter if he doesn't, we want him to be happy with whatever decision he makes."

Rose has played in just seven of Cleveland's 18 games this season because of a left ankle injury the point guard sustained while driving to the basket on Oct. 20 in Milwaukee. He's averaging 14.3 points in his first season with Cleveland.

SEDA fetes top performers

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The Saipan Electronic Darts Association gave out hundreds of trophies along with plaques, medals, and other certificates to the best teams and players in the eight divisions of the Bud Light Darts League.

Members and other players of teams that participated last season along with their families, league officials, and sponsors packed the Charley's Cabaret of the Pacific Islands Club Saipan yesterday.

The best players in the eight divisions of the Hi In and Out, and Top Gun darts events were the first to receive their awards. Ladies, Kingfisher C, Chichirika C, Thursday Flame Tree, Thursday Fanihi, Tuesday, A, and Masters were the eight divisions.

Valerie Naputi (Ladies, 158) led the winners list of the Hi In awards and was joined by Guru Iguel (Kingfisher 152), Franky Kim (Chichirika, 160), Frances Magofna (Flame Tree, 160), Richard Santos (Fanihi, 160), Chris Omnes (Tuesday, 160), Boom Cruz (A, 170), and Pam Ybanez (Masters, 170). Magofna (Ladies, 97), Jeff Sablan (Kingfisher, 112), Jess Sablan (Chichirika, 120), Hank Magofna (Flame Tree, 157), Aran Mendoza (Fanihi, 152), John Cruz (Tuesday, 130), James Tudela (A, 155), and Jhun Lambon (Masters, 160) were the recipients of Hi Out award.

Naputi (Ladies, 39.19) also won one of the Top Guns awards. Other winners in the same category were Kevin Alexander (Kingfisher, 42.84), Patrick Rotap (Chichirika, 49.74; Tuesday,, 53.03), Joey Songsong (Flame Tree, 50.15), Tony Castro (Fanihi, 51.03), Boom Cruz (A, 57.38), and Gilbert Gatmaitan (Masters, 72.59)

The league awarded, too team members with Mr. and Ms. SEDA trophies, which were given to individuals who regularly play every week. Alexander and Joker Camacho received the Mr. SEDA award for each playing four times a week, while Reina Reftang was named Ms. SEDA for seeing action three times.

VFW Bull It (Ladies and Chichirika), Naked Fish Re-Darts (Kingfisher), Naked Fish Dartaholics (Flame Tree), Franken Dart Crafters (Fanihi), The Venue Lupeyt Boyz (Tuesday), Franken Drunken Warriors (A), and The Venue Calamity Fun (Masters) took the Sportsmanship awards.

Named most valuable players of the season in the eight divisions with the highest winning percentages were Michelle Olita (Ladies, 90.4), Swiper Ongiil (Kingfisher, 99.9), Rotap (Chichirika, 94.1), Songsong (Flame Tree, 100), Joker Camacho (Fanihi, 97), JR Vito (Tuesday, 100), Alfred Hocog (A, 97.8), and Gatmaitan (Masters, 100).

The league also promoted several players with Rotap, Adrian Montalbo, Orly Paconlan, Bobby De Leon, Manny De Gracia, and Manny Bahillo moving to B flights. Alexander, Ongiil, Derick Ayuyu, Chris Sablan, Duke Malakai, Kenneth Kaneshi, Arnel Banzagale were also promoted to the B division, while Songsong, Leo Itaas, and Tony Castro improved to A.

The Nipa Hut Exquisites (Ladies), The Venue Parakeyu (Kingfisher), 6JMS Scorpions (Chichirika), Jonny's Serial Killaz (Flame Tree), 6JMS Bandits (Fanihi), Lupeyt Boyz (Tuesday), 6JMS Mafia I (A), and Oleai Nakayoshi (Masters) were the Bud Light Cup champions.

The Exquisites also topped the Ladies division's regular season to join other classes Parakeyu (Kingfisher), 9 Eleven Knights (Chichirika), Serial Killaz (Flame Tree), Mafia II (Fanihi), D'Strikers (Tuesday), Ridin'Dartty (A), and Mafia (Masters).

The division runners-up were The Venue Momshies (Ladies), 6JMS Hite'em Up (Kingfisher), Nipa Hut Shot (Chichirika), Drillers (Flame Tree), D'Strikers 2 (Fanihi), Xecutionerz (Tuesday), 101 Proofers (A), and Nakayoshi (Masters).

Hot Mess (Ladies), Ridin'Darrty C (Kingfisher), Beach Flukers (Chichirika), Ridin'Darrty (Flame Tree), 80 Proofers (Fanihi), Lupeyt Boyz (Tuesday), Dragon Masters (A), and Pythons (Masters) were the third place teams.

JON PEREZ

Pam Ybanez, left, and Richard Santos receive their respective High In awards in the Masters and Fanihi divisions during yesterday's season-ending ceremony for the Saipan Electronica Darts Association's Bud Light League at the Charley's Cabaret of Pacific Islands Club Saipan.

JON PEREZ

From left, Reina Reftang, gets the Ms. SEDA title for playing the most games in a week, while Joker Camacho, and Kelvis Alexander receive their Mr. SEDA awards.

Tudela takes SGA November Ace

Alex Tudela topped the Saipan Golfers Association November Ace of the Month Tournament held at the Marianas Country Club early this month.

Tudela shot a net 70 for a four-stroke win over Nick Sablan. The 9-handicapper Tudela fired a 43 and 36 on the front and back nines, respectively, for a gross 79. Sablan, on the other hand, had pair of 39s for a 78, and deducting his 4 handicap, he ended up with a net 74, just one shot ahead of third placer Steve Balakrishna. The 11-handicapper Balakrishna posted a 45 in the first nine holes and a 41 in the last for a gross 86 and net 75.

Tudela's victory this month was highlighted by two closest to the pins shots on No. 8 and 12. Other closest to the pin winners were James Whang and Larry Guerrero on No. 6 and 16, respectively.

In the longest drive category, the winners were Frances Sablan on No. 2 and Rick Kautz on No. 18.

With Tudela's triumph, he now qualifies for the SGA Ace of Aces Tournament, joining other finalists Frances Sablan (January), John "Nanni" Cruz (February), Juan Lizama (March), Nick Sablan (April), Larry Deleon Guerrero (May), Das Krishnan (June), Steve Balakrishna (July), Joe Demapan (August), Frank Castro (September), and Juan "Pan" Guerrero (October).

The two-round SGA Ace of Aces will be held at the Kingfisher Golf Links on Dec. 23 with Round 1's tee time set for 9am and Round 2 at 1pm. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

REVIVAL

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ing up after its members, who were mostly foreign workers, went back to their countries. The sport also lacked proper practice venue to help promote its grassroots development program. A new table tennis group has been formed last year, but has yet to organize a tournament.

"We're hoping that with our partnership with Mr. [Hui Yeol] Park's group and the CNMI players, we could revive and develop table tennis on Saipan. We're going to Korea next time to play against them," said KPPAS president Park.

Hui Yeol Park is a former professional table tennis player in South Korea. He is from Jinju City in South Gyeongsang Province and operates a table tennis academy together with Jeong. Hui Yeol Park also donated table tennis equipment—balls and rackets—that the Korean group here would use in helping promote the sport in the CNMI.

Budhi Gurung and Charlie Chen were the other players that competed in the games, while Kwang Sun Lee, Young Soon Roh, Jae Young Lim, Bu Gon Jun, and Seung Hoon Lee were the visiting players from Jinju City. Kwang Sun was a member of the South Korean national table tennis team and is now its head coach, while Young Son Roh was a famous player during his high school days.

GREGOIRE

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lower half of the draw.

At the upper half, the No. 1 seed Jacob also registered two victories via two sets to set up a final showdown against Gregoire. Jacob first topped Nason Wessel, 6-1, 6-1, and then defeated No. 4 David Kwon, 6-2, 6-1. Wessel made it to the quarterfinals against Jacob after dominating Alvin Bang, 6-1, 6-1, while Kwon marched into the Final Four following his victory over Brandon Lee, 6-1, 6-0. Kwon ended up joining Jacob and Gregoire in the Top 3 after beating Jonny in the consolation game, 8-4.

Meanwhile, No. 4 seed Hye Jin Elliot stunned No. 2 Anika Camacho in the girls U12 finals, 6-1, 6-0.

Elliot earlier eliminated top-ranked J.C. Ferrer in the semifinals, 6-0, 6-0, to book the first finals ticket. Ferrer barged into the Final Four following a 6-1, 6-1 triumph over Serin Chung, while Elliot shut down Jin Hee Hoo, 6-0, 6-0, in the other quarterfinal pairing at the top half of the draw.

At the bottom half, Camacho eased past Hoo Wang, 6-0, 6-1, to set up a semis duel against No. 3 Helen Kim—a 6-4, 6-2 winner versus Dana Lee. Camacho went on to oust Kim, 6-2, 6-3, before her streak ended in the finals after losing to Elliot.

Eight other events (doubles and singles) were played in the opening week of the TanHoldings-sponsored tournament and results of the remaining games will be reported in *Saipan Tribune's* Tuesday and Wednesday editions.

WHITE

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Barbo broke loose in the third quarter as he fired 15 points and handed White Haus a 13-point advantage, 69-56. Before the White Haus big man's show in the penultimate frame, his squad was only up by 4 at the break, 46-42. He drilled 9 straight points in the early part of the pivotal third and had another string of points (6) late in that canto to halt Tropang Ridhors' rally.

Tropang Ridhors moved within 7, 52-59, after falling behind by as much as 14, 45-59, behind Junar Guiab and Ken Viray's baskets. However, Barbo stopped than run when he made three charities off a Joy Dayrit technical free throw and a regular foul from Guiab. Then Nonato finished things off for White Haus in the third frame, scoring the squad's last 4 points to bring their lead back to twin digits, entering the final canto.

In the fourth quarter, Tropang Ridhorse made one final push to mount a comeback with Guiab, Viray, and Reggie Yoshisawa teaming up. However, Barbo was there to keep the ship steady and lead White Haus to the semifinals.

In the semis this Wednesday, White Haus will duel the top-ranked Batang Bear Brand in the first game at 6pm. In the second Final Four pairing at 7:30pm, Team Sawi will challenge No. 2 Silencer.

The trio of Brendon Talania, J.R. Concepcion, and Ehroll Peredo made it possible for Team Sawi to pull off an upset over Black Mamba and advance to the semifinals. Talania had a game-high 29 points, while Concepcion and Peredo chipped in 20 and 18, respectively. They outgunned Chris Lansang, Alex Lauron, and White Capalad, 67-61.

Talania scored 9 of his total markers in the fourth quarter, which started with Team Sawi still down by 5, 55-60. Talania nearly matched Black Mamba's output in the fourth quarter, as the higher-seeded team was held to five field goals. Concepcion backed up Talania in the fourth, adding 8 markers, 6 of them came from downtown, while Peredo, Emerson Malaqui, and Joseph Galulu also scored in the final canto for Team Sawi.

Only three players hit the board for Black Mamba in the fourth quarter meltdown.

First Game

Team Sawi 79 — Talania 29, Concepcion 20, Peredo 18, Malaqui 9, Factor 2, Galulu 2.

Black Mamba 70 — Lansang 22, Lauron 20, Capalad 19, Odicta 6, Salazar 2, Ibanez 1.

Scoring by quarters: 13-17, 35-38, 58-60, 79-70.

Second Game

White Haus 91 — Barbo 45, Nonato 15, Tabora 10, Quizon 9, Mateo 6, Ocampo 4.

Tropang Ridhors 85 — Guiab 23, Viray 21, Morales 12, Yoshisawa 9, Dayrit 9, Acosta 9, Claveria 2.

Scoring by quarters: 28-27, 46-42, 69-56, 91-85.

SEDA 2017 Season Awards Banquet

PHOTOS By JON PEREZ

Pacific Amusement general manager Jim Gebhardt, left, gives MARPAC representative Jarvin Mendiola a plaque of appreciation for their continued support to the Saipan Electronic Darts Association League during yesterday's awards ceremony at the Charley's Cabaret of the Pacific Islands Club Saipan.

The eight division winners in the Hi Out category show their trophies.

The VFW Bull-It players show their Chichirika C division Sportsmanship award.

The VFW Bull-It II players gather for a photo after receiving the Sportsmanship award in the Ladies division.

Members of the Naked Fish Dartaholics display their Sportsmanship award for the Flame Tree B division.

The Naked Fish Re-Darts players are the Sportsmanship awardees in the Kingfisher C division.

The division awardees in the Top Gun event pose with their trophies.

Ladies division Hi In winner Frances Magofna, left, joins Thursday Fanihi champ Richard Santos for a photo.

Messi agrees to contract extension with Barca

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Gregoire gets first U12 singles title

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Anthony Gregoire attempts a return from the baseline during his boys U12 title match against Jacob Jackson in the 9th Annual TanHoldings Tennis Classic yesterday at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan courts.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Anthony Gregoire won the battle of the Top 2 seeds in the boys U12 singles finals in the 9th Annual TanHoldings Tennis Classic after outclassing Jacob Jackson, 7-5, 7-5, yesterday at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan courts.

Gregoire was seeded second in the 11-player draw and did not drop a single set en route to winning his first boys U12 singles championship. He drew a bye in the opening round of the Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association's first tournament for the 2017-2018 season and then swept Akash Rai in the quarterfinals to march into the semis. Rai moved into the Round of 8 after ousting Ru Ma Lee, 6-0, 6-0.

In the Final Four, Gregoire was paired against Jonny Jackson, a 6-0, 6-1 victor over La Hun Lam. Lam, before losing to Jonny, eliminated Jun Cheol Hwang, 6-2, 5-7, 10-8. Jonny was eventually booted out, too, as Gregoire foiled a family affair in the championship game after posting another straight set win, 6-2, 6-4, at the

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
White Haus' Darwin Barbo, right, is hounded by Tropang Ridhors' Ken Viray, left, and Mike Surima during the third quarter of their playoff game in the IT&E-sponsored Ali'i Blue Haus caging last Saturday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Revival of table tennis sought

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The Korean Ping Pong Association of Saipan hosted a group of South Korean table tennis players and coaches and held a one-day goodwill tournament against former CNMI national team members last Saturday at the Korean Center in San Antonio.

KPPAS president Tae Won Park said they hope the mini tournament they organized in cooperation with the former representatives of the CNMI squad would revive interest in the sport as they plan to hold regular games with their South Korean counterparts.

The women's pair of 6th Micro Games double gold medalist Jean Shi and Jeong Mi Jeong bested the men's duo of Hui Yeol Park and Steve Lim in the finals, 9-11, 11-9, 11-7. Five other pairs participated in the pocket tournament.

KPPAS president Park said Hui Yeol Park has been coming to Saipan every year since 2012 after being invited by the Korean Association of Saipan. "We invited him to come here to maintain the friendship between our associations with their table tennis group."

"He is our contact in Korea and this year he brought with him several top former and current table tennis players to play with us. We invited table tennis players here on Saipan led by [Steve] Lim," added KPPAS president Park.

Lim was the president of the Marianas Amateur Table Tennis Association whose players won a total of 10 medals—four gold, three silver, and three bronze—when Saipan hosted the Micronesian Games in 2006.

Interest in table tennis slowly faded with MATTA fold-

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JON PEREZ
Jeong Mi Jeong, left, eyes the ball as she prepares to serve, while partner Jean Shi waits for the return in their finals match against the pair of Hyui Yeol Park and Steve Lim in last Saturday's goodwill match held at the Korean Center in San Antonio.

White Haus, Team Sawi enter semis

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The semis cast in the 2nd Ali'i Blue Haus Invitational Basketball League is now complete after Team Sawi and White House eliminated their respective playoff foes last Saturday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

The No. 6 seed Team Sawi earned the third Final Four berth following a 79-70 upset over the third-ranked Black Mamba, 79-70, while No. 5 White Haus got the fourth and last semis ticket after ousting No. 4 Tropang Ridhors, 91-85.

Darwin Barbo anchored White Haus' victory, as he exploded for 45 points, including three clutch free throws that sealed the team's spot to the semifinals. Arjay Nonato also scored in double figures with 15, 5 of them came in the closing minutes of the fourth quarter to help White Haus foil Tropang Ridhors's comeback bid.

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